

May 1955

National Parent-Teacher

THE P.T.A. MAGAZINE

NCU

Objects of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers



- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, church, and community.
- To raise the standards of home life.
- To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the training of the child.
- To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.

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California.....	1,316,048	Maryland.....	117,408	South Carolina.....	67,013
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THE P.T.A. MAGAZINE

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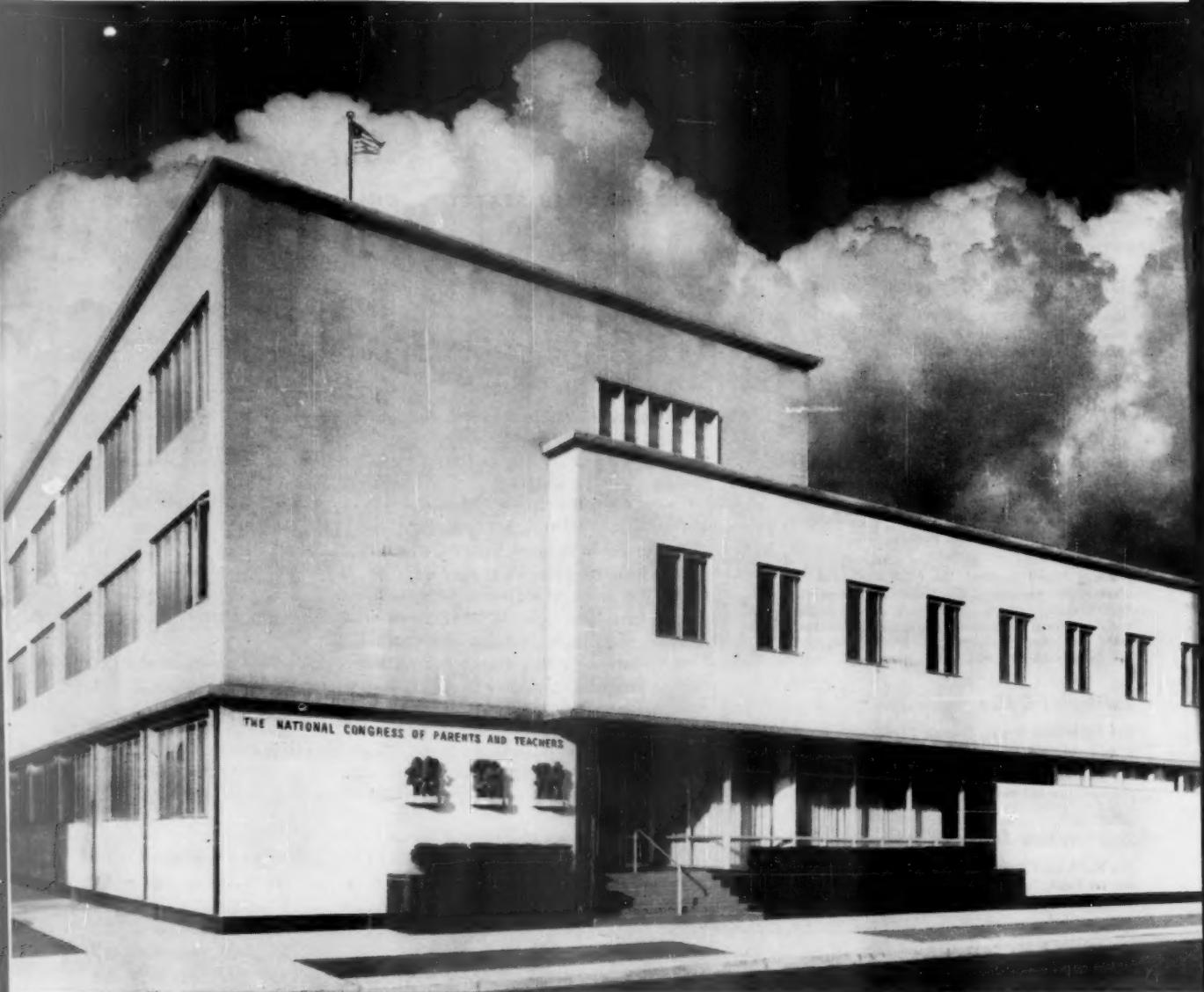
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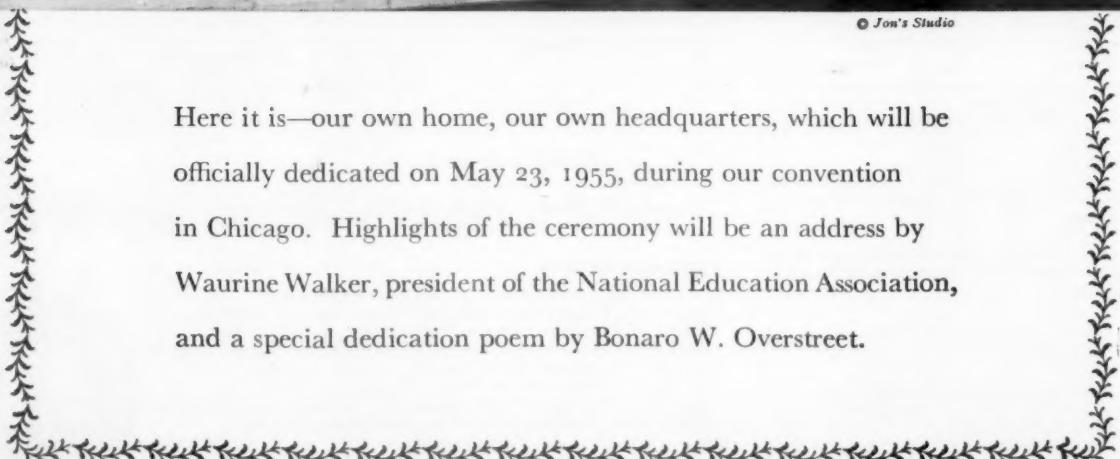
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Here it is—our own home, our own headquarters, which will be officially dedicated on May 23, 1955, during our convention in Chicago. Highlights of the ceremony will be an address by Waurine Walker, president of the National Education Association, and a special dedication poem by Bonaro W. Overstreet.





The President's Message

For a Peaceful Society

"BETTER HOMES, Better Schools, and Better Communities for a Peaceful Society." This is the theme of the coming convention of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. It is a fateful theme, and we are exploring it at a crucial time.

At the outset we should remind ourselves of one inescapable fact: The unleashing of atomic power has outmoded many concepts, but it has not outmoded integrity or individual responsibility. What each of us thinks and says and does is still important. The staggering force of the atom does not absolve us from accountability for our actions. Our words, our deeds, our decisions still count. In fact, they count more than ever. For the stakes are greater than ever, and the issue of peace can in the end be resolved only by us, the citizens.

What do we mean by a peaceful society? Are we thinking of a society without conflicts or problems of any kind? Hardly. Rather we have in mind a society in which conflicts are resolved without violence, without war. Obviously a peaceful society depends on individuals who are absolutely committed to peace. A society is peaceful to the extent that its men and women seek and insist upon nonviolent solutions to whatever problems arise.

The major question we shall be asking at our convention is this: What special role do parents and teachers have in building a peaceful society? Our immediate task, it seems to me, is to instill in children the insights and the attitudes upon which peace depends. What are these insights and these attitudes?

We must encourage our boys and girls to be sensitive to the thoughts and feelings of those with whom they work and play. We must help them to see the difference between attacking problems and attacking people. We must show them that the human family is one. And with greater conviction than ever, we must teach them to prize reason, intelligence, patience, and the preciousness of human life itself.

In this task of building a peaceful society one of the greatest assets we can cultivate in children is an

informed conscience that asserts itself forthrightly. Through the centuries millions have fervently desired peace. Yet why is it that a dictator or a handful of men has from time to time been able to set those desires aside and decree war? Are not the people themselves responsible? Our children should know that creating a peaceful society demands the kind of courage and vigilance that will prevent dictatorship from ever arising.

BUT surely we cannot put the entire burden of maintaining peace on our children. We cannot shift the responsibility for a warless world onto the next generation. We know that peace rests on many foundations, some economic and some political. We cannot neglect these or any other bases for peace. At the same time that we are educating children for a peaceful society we must use our influence to make sure that our laws and our institutions are also consistently directed toward that end.

President Eisenhower has recently taken a major step in this direction. In an unprecedented move he has created the post of "secretary of peace," as the news reports describe it. His choice for this post, which has Cabinet rank, is Harold E. Stassen, who has for several years directed this country's foreign aid programs and whom we are most fortunate to have as a speaker at our convention.

We of the P.T.A. are not blind to enormous world problems. It is because we recognize these problems that we see our tasks more clearly. As citizens we will continue to support measures that lead to peace. As parents and teachers we must continue to use all the knowledge at our command so that our children will be able not only to live in a peaceful world but to understand and preserve it.

Lucille P. Leonard

President, National Congress of Parents and Teachers

We're Training

UNFAMILIAR sounds are coming through the windows of public elementary schools these days. In a grade school in Holland, Michigan, a fourth-grader is doing his arithmetic: "Zweimal drei ist sechs" ("Twice three is six"). In Middletown, Connecticut, a little girl is describing her family: "J'ai deux soeurs, et leurs noms sont Marie et Dorothée" ("I have two sisters, and their names are Mary and Dorothy"). In Atlanta, Georgia, a child is telling time: "Son las ocho menos diez" ("It is ten minutes of eight").

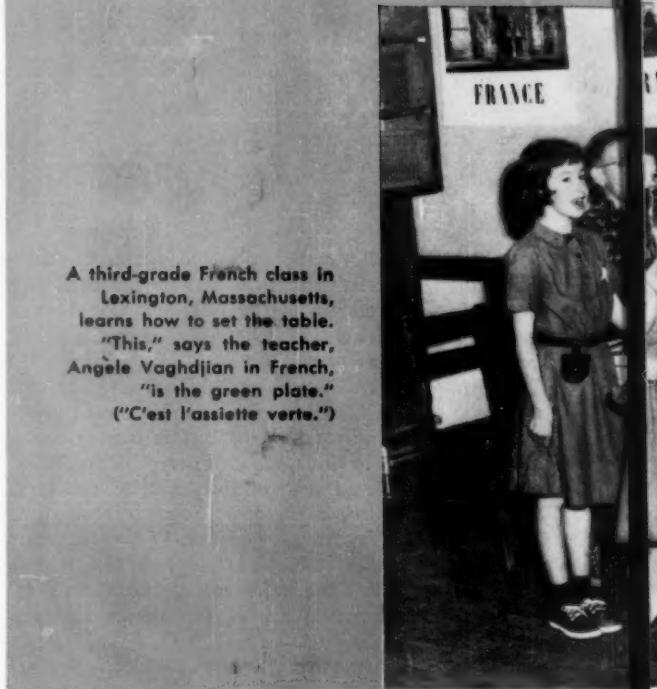
It's all part of a fast growing, popular movement toward teaching foreign languages in public elementary schools. In 1954 at least 330,000 pupils from kindergarten to the sixth grade were learning Spanish, French, German, Italian, even Polish. Classroom teachers and language specialists were giving instruction to 209,549 of these children in 1,478 public grade schools and 73 college demonstration schools. Eighty per cent of these ventures were begun during the past three years. The remaining pupils were introduced to foreign languages via radio lessons broadcast directly into the classroom. There were 119,522 such radio pupils in the public schools of eight states—a tremendous jump from the 10,000 of 1953.

This movement is not a localized phenomenon. It involves nearly three hundred cities and towns in forty-three states and the District of Columbia. Spanish, of course, is taught in cities of the Southwest like Los Angeles, San Diego, Phoenix, El Paso, and San Antonio. But children are learning Spanish and other foreign languages in big cities all over the country—in Atlanta, Miami, Seattle, Des Moines, St. Louis, Detroit, Birmingham, New York, Cleveland, Richmond, Chicago, and Washington, D. C. And language study goes on at the very grass roots of American life, in little towns with names like Sleepy Eye, Minnesota; Paw Paw, Michigan; Beatrice, Nebraska; Rotterdam Junction, New York; and Ismay, Montana.

Why this widespread interest in foreign languages? It is not a fad; it is the expression of a fundamental

A third-grade French class in Lexington, Massachusetts, learns how to set the table.

"This," says the teacher, Angèle Vaghidian in French, "is the green plate." ("C'est l'assiette verte.")



need in modern American civilization. For scientific progress has shrunk the earth and made neighbors of all people at the very time when history has thrust upon the United States tremendous responsibilities. In December 1954 Hollis L. Caswell, president of Teachers College, Columbia University, declared: "Now it becomes clear that national welfare and safety are directly affected by failure or success in developing attitudes and skills which are major objectives of teaching modern foreign languages."

In the past, American education tended to look upon language study as a nonessential cultural pursuit. But alert educators all over the nation are revising their views. Just last February James B. Conant, high commissioner for Germany and former president of Harvard University, asked: "Does the American tradition in education, now approaching the respectable age of one hundred years, stand in need of modification to meet the challenge of our new

Linguists Young



© Modern Language Association

world? . . . My answer would be an emphatic yes. . . . The place of foreign language instruction, like the place of history, in the future curricula of American schools will be very different from the past."

Childhood Is the Time

The growth of foreign language study in elementary schools is dramatic evidence that many school administrators, teachers, and parents already realize that foreign languages are a vital national resource. Furthermore, this movement reflects the growing belief that early childhood is the correct time to start learning a second language. An eminent Canadian neurologist, Wilder Penfield, has said: "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." Educators, before all others, must realize that this is particularly true of the 'organ of the mind.' Physiological evolution causes it to specialize in the learning of language before the ages of

Kenneth Mildenberger

A new literacy campaign is going on in our grade schools—a campaign to teach our boys and girls the languages of neighbors in other lands. More and more we shall be thinking with these neighbors, working and planning with them. Most certainly we must be able to speak with them in their own languages. Here's how the elementary schools are preparing children for that challenge.

ten to fourteen. After that, gradually, inevitably, it seems to become rigid, slow, less receptive."

And because language study is now given this chance to get started in elementary school, the teaching methods employed may be radically different from the past practices in most high schools. There the brevity of the course has led many teachers to neglect the spoken language while concentrating on reading, translation, and grammar. In the grades, however, children learn a foreign language naturally, by listening to the teacher and imitating. They begin speaking it *immediately*. Reading and writing are not begun until the later grades, after conversational familiarity with the language is fixed.

High school and college teachers are amazed by the oral facility of children. In Illinois a skeptical university professor of Spanish observed a class of six-year-olds for half an hour and left exclaiming, "They speak Spanish better than my college students!"

Parents are delighted. The mother of a third-grade girl in Fairfield, Connecticut, declared: "I've found that my daughter enjoys using what words she has learned freely and without hesitation. In the case of my high school boys, a language is to be read only for classroom work. They're hesitant about speaking it aloud." In Superior, Wisconsin, the mother of a fifth-grade child said: "I notice that my child has learned to speak French with a fluency that I never acquired in my high school courses."

Naturally, satisfactory results cannot be achieved by halfhearted efforts. An Akron, Ohio, teacher warns: "Please recommend that no language program could possibly succeed until a teacher is selected who loves little children and is willing to work and to work hard!"

An excellent example of such a person is Carlos Rivera, who four years ago began a Spanish program for English-speaking children in grade one of the El Paso, Texas, public schools. Each year the program

words are never used, only Spanish sentences and phrases. Use is made of choral responses, singing, dialogues, and dramatic presentations, and each lesson builds upon what has gone before.

El Paso, of course, has a bilingual population, and the Spanish language program was initiated in the hope that intercultural tensions would be lessened. This purpose is being achieved, but the superintendent of schools, Mortimer Brown, believes that foreign language study in the grades is "*even more essential* in communities where only one language is spoken, for there the children run the danger of complete cultural isolation."

Learning by Ear

Probably the method employed at El Paso is the ideal that all school systems would like, but in many places it has been felt advisable to use classroom teachers. Since few present-day elementary teachers have adequate foreign language preparation, larger programs of this nature require special aids. In San Diego the room teacher's work is supplemented by Spanish tape-recordings. In other cities radio stations broadcast language lessons for schools, and in Schenectady and the District of Columbia television carries the lessons into the classrooms.

These language programs that use classroom teachers usually start on a small scale and expand as an increasing number of teachers take advantage of in-service language courses provided at high schools or nearby colleges. Last fall Wayne University was teaching Spanish to sixty classroom teachers from Dearborn, Michigan, and both Spanish and French to teachers from Royal Oak. In Seattle, Washington, more than a hundred room teachers voluntarily enrolled in a conversational Spanish course that required two-hour sessions after a full day's teaching. With classroom teachers doing the instruction, the language may be introduced incidentally at opportune moments throughout the day. This method has obvious advantages, but some experts see greater effectiveness in a single, carefully controlled period during which no English is used.

Of very special significance to parents and administrators is the effect of foreign language study on the lives of the children. For many pupils this study has become the most interesting part of school, the class they like best. Eloquent testimony appears in a note written by a District of Columbia mother to her child's fourth-grade teacher: "Please excuse Joan from class this morning about ten-fifteen. She has to go to church. She could have gone at nine but didn't want to miss her French lesson."

Frequently foreign language experience does not end in the classroom. The principal of a New York City school where French is available to a limited number of pupils as a club activity reported that the fortunate children in the French club use after-



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has been advanced a grade, and now seven assistants help him teach Spanish to 5,500 pupils in grades one through four of fourteen schools. Carlos Rivera's instructional method seeks to make of each twenty-minute lesson a pure experience in Spanish language and culture.

Three times a week the Spanish specialist knocks on the classroom door, and the gleeful class invites him, in Spanish, to enter. He does so, and the lesson begins. It is usually integrated with the regular course of study and emphasizes real-life situations. No English is spoken. Learning is by ear, with the help of pictures and various real objects. Isolated

school time and lunch hours to teach everything they have learned to the many other children on the club's waiting list. And an Allentown, Pennsylvania, fourth-grader surprised her family when it was her turn to say grace at table. She used the first lines of a song she had learned in Spanish class: "*Te damos gracias, o Señor*" ("We thank thee, O Lord").

Administrators are pleasantly surprised by the effect of foreign language study upon the rest of schoolwork. Maud Price, director of instruction at Royal Oak, Michigan, is one of them. "I have become very enthusiastic about the project," she says. "The interest engendered in other work, because of foreign language study, is evident." This is especially true when the language study is related to other units of the curriculum such as arithmetic, music, and art.

The mother of a sixth-grader learning Spanish in Salem, Oregon, told his teacher: "It brings social studies to life! It has fixed in Ted's mind such detail that we are amazed at how much knowledge he has acquired."

When courses in spoken French and German were initiated at a public school in St. James, Long Island, the principal made a fundamental discovery about his entire school program: "We have found that some children experience difficulty in 'listening to learn.' These children seem to feel that reading is the only source of knowledge—and from this we have learned where we must do more work, not only in foreign languages but with our own as well."

Parents Vote Yes

The great majority of parents have given enthusiastic support to foreign language study for their children. The program in Washington, D. C., was begun after a questionnaire survey brought 12,575 affirmative and only 110 negative replies from parents in Division One (white) and 10,053 yeses and no opposition in Division Two (colored). Last summer Emma Birkmaier, conducting a summer workshop for teachers at the University of Minnesota, needed 120 children to fill demonstration classes in French, Spanish, and German. A story in the Minneapolis *Star* brought an avalanche of more than two thousand phone calls from clamoring parents. The university switchboard was jammed, and Dr. Birkmaier's home phone had to be disconnected.

P.T.A. members have played active roles in this movement. Recently several classes in French and Spanish were begun in Oakland, California, under the sponsorship of the P.T.A. In order to ensure foreign language study for their children, the P.T.A. of Dwight School in Fairfield, Connecticut, offered to provide a car pool—one mother a day each month—to transport a language teacher to the school. And the P.T.A. of Lincoln School in the same town contributed twenty-five dollars to the school library



This third-grade French class in Schenectady, New York, is taking part in a weekly television program that is channeled into fourteen of the city's schools. Ann Slack is the television French teacher. More than a thousand children participate in these programs and receive additional instruction from classroom teachers. © Modern Language Association

for the purchase of children's books in French. The committee on world understanding of the Birmingham, Alabama, Council of Parent-Teacher Associations chose as its project for 1954-55 the promotion of the study of foreign languages at all levels.

Although experience has demonstrated a variety of desirable outcomes from the learning of foreign languages in elementary schools, parents of children who do not yet have this opportunity should be cautioned against forcing upon administrators a hasty or ill-conceived program. Education in languages is of such fundamental importance to our present and future role in the world community that an ineffective program is more dangerous than no program at all. Yet if you believe in the need for foreign language study in our modern world, minor and even major obstacles can be overcome—with intelligent planning and cooperation.

Until three years ago Kenneth Mildenberger was a teacher of college English. Then the Modern Language Association asked him to join its staff in a foundation-supported investigation of the place of foreign languages in American life. Fortunately for the Association he was able to take a leave of absence. In 1953 and 1954 he surveyed the status of foreign language study in elementary schools for the U.S. Office of Education. He edits the *FL Newsletter*.

What Can We Do

The right sweater, the right car,
the right date—these can be
heartbreakingly important to
young people. Is such snobbery
more than a passing phase?
And can it be controlled?



© H. Armstrong Roberts

Joseph K. Folsom

IN ONE of our more prosperous suburbs it has become the custom for parents to entertain the teachers. Each family represented in a classroom takes its turn inviting the teacher to dinner. At one time, however, some of the teachers felt they were being patronized. In spite of the surface friendliness they thought they sensed subtle hints that they were considered socially beneath the parents. One morning a teacher came to school, very angry, to report the final outrage. "Those snobs didn't even bother to come and call for me last night. They just sent their limousine with the chauffeur and maid!"

There was a shout of indignation, followed by comments in language less temperate than teachers usually permit themselves. Finally a lonely, thoughtful voice spoke out: "In our United States of America is it an insult to ride with a chauffeur and a maid? And how do we know what Mrs. Smith was up against at five thirty-five yesterday afternoon?"

It is not always clear, then, just who the real snob is. According to Russell Lynes, who has written a book on snobbery, not only are there social snobs

and occupational snobs, but almost anyone may be snobbish about his food, his dress, his hobbies, his skills, his movie preferences, his sophistication, or the important people he knows.

We used to think of snobbery as especially prevalent among married women with a little leisure, but it is not unknown among teen-agers and even young children. Back in the twenties, the Lynds—a husband-and-wife team of sociologists—were studying a typical American community, "Middletown." One of the mothers they interviewed told them that what she most dreaded about summer was the way the adolescents loafed around, arguing over clothes and how to dress. More recently the most troublesome child in a school in an underprivileged neighborhood was a boy who made no effort to learn, expected favored treatment from his teacher and his classmates, and would blurt out in answer to a question about arithmetic: "My father is going to have the biggest car in the north end!"

Nor are the schools always free of snobbery. As a final, cruel irony educators might well point to those

About SNOBBERY?

exceptionally fine schools that are superbly staffed and equipped, democratic within their own walls, but condescending toward outsiders. Sometimes, indeed, this failure is largely the fault of the outsiders. Snobbery is a two-way street—contempt toward somebody or something supposedly "lower" and envy toward what is supposedly "higher."

To recognize a disease is not, of course, to cure it. Yet I believe that a better understanding of this malady, shared with as many of our fellow citizens as possible, will go a long way toward prevention and cure.

The Things We All Seek

What should we know about snobbery? First, that although it is offensive, it stems from the desire for status or prestige—something universal and inevitable and in many respects good. This desire for status may show itself in many ways, and, depending on how it is expressed, it may bear various names—pride, self-esteem, rivalry, envy, emulation, self-assertion. We need to recognize that all these expressions, desirable and otherwise, really spring from the same motive. Let us call it the status motive.

Russell Lynes helps us to see this unity by labeling the whole business, good and bad, *snobbery*. After he has convicted almost everybody except himself of being a snob, he deftly creates a category that seems to fit himself: the "anti-snob snob."

Some people may now sit back resignedly, comforting themselves with the thought, "We're all snobs. So what?" But the problem cannot be dissolved by genial humor. The harsh fact is that some people try to satisfy the status motive in ways that may hurt others. And the result is miserable human relations.

Another thing we should know is that the status motive, including snobbery, is only one of several drives that move men to act. Some people emphasize status more than others do, and whole societies differ in their emphases. My generation of Americans is accused of having started a great overemphasis of the sex motive. Possibly so, but I suspect that America suffers much more from overemphasis of the status

motive. Of course even the typical American suburbanite is better off in this respect than the Tlingit Indian of Alaska, whose supreme goal is to humiliate his rivals by putting on a more extravagant, generous, and wasteful "potlatch" than they have done.

But, you may ask, is there any human striving that is not a desire for some kind of status? Yes, there is: whatever you seek without comparing yourself with others. You can, of course, relate yourself to others without comparing yourself with them. Not *relationship* to your fellow men but *comparison*, favorable or unfavorable, with your fellow men is the essence of the status motive. And the quality of that motive will determine the good that may be in pride and the evil that may be in snobbery.

Don't we need to compare ourselves with others, so as to maintain proper standards? I say no. If dress, for example, were freed from status pressure, a girl would not become indifferent to her appearance or to other people. She would notice how other girls dress, but she would not feel bound by their preferences. She would dress to suit her own figure, her own sensitiveness to heat and cold, her own habits of work and play, and her own pocketbook.

Tyranny of the Group

The status motive sometimes demands unreasonable conformity to the group you are with. It may even keep you from spending money in certain ways or from acting efficiently. For example, in many communities it compels the high school student to carry four to six books, plus other sundry articles, under his arm in a crowded bus or on a slushy, slippery street swept by fresh northwest winds—when he might with far greater ease carry all this baggage in a brief case or a schoolbag.

We should know, too, that many a child who has conflicts and has been deprived emotionally may develop an authoritarian pattern of personality. This type of person emphasizes status, pride, power, and security at the expense of love, curiosity, and creativity. And he may do so whether he is underdog or overdog.

Exactly what conditions produce this type of per-

sonality? Psychologists have been working on the problem, but our knowledge is still far from complete. Thoughtful parents, mulling over what we do know now, may feel that they themselves are responsible for whatever snobbishness their children show. Actually many causes of snobbery may lie quite outside the parents' control.

One thing, however, all of us can do. We can stimulate our children's curiosity, their interest in the world and in human beings. We can encourage creative experiences. We can show them what it is to love one's fellow men and thereby demonstrate that love casts out not only fear but competition and invidious comparisons.

We can consider our own conversation at home—the influence of casually spoken words, oft repeated phrases. Sometimes the useful question is not "What kind of parent am I?" or "What are my deep-down motives?" but "What is my line of talk?" James Bosارد has written about the importance of table talk. Can parents teach their children democratic attitudes if their own conversation is full of malicious comment, innuendoes about neighbors, or warnings not to be like So-and-So?

On the other hand, if parents convey to their children the feeling that each one of them has something which no misfortune, no comparison or competition can take away, those youngsters may grow up without a strenuous need to struggle for prestige. We all know devoutly religious people who feel that as long as they do God's will, their fellow men cannot make them envious or ashamed.

Every family can find plenty to talk about that is objective, constructive, and friendly toward the outside world. When unpleasant things must be said, parents can talk them over privately. Any group—school or family—that tries to impart inner strength by disparaging outsiders is sowing the seeds of future evil.

Some parents violate democracy through their acts rather than their words. Perhaps they try using influence or wealth to get a lazy child special attention at school. They may bring pressure to bear on teachers or principals for other personal ends. They may say that one man is as good as another, but what really counts to them is that one has more "pull" than another—and uses this pull to push people around!

Suppose we parents really do feel that we are teaching and living democracy in our daily lives. Can we be sure that our children won't be snobs? Not necessarily. They will be less likely to develop snobbery, but they may still do so, at least temporarily during their teens. That is the period in which influences in the school and the neighborhood count for so much—when a girl may be judged by how many sweaters she has, the number of formals, her week-end dates; and a boy may be rated high if he

possesses the approved number of sports jackets and drives a stripped-down convertible. Many wise parents face this problem of teen-age, out-of-joint values.

Ridicule Is Not Enough

This leads us to another important point. Sometimes the best way of routing an evil is to expose and attack it publicly. Here is an opportunity for some effective cooperation among parents, teachers, students, textbook writers, and P.T.A.'s to discredit snobbery. This doesn't mean a gentle ridicule of all snobbishness in general; it means going after vicious snobbish situations that exist concretely in the community. In one place the big trouble may be with fraternities; in another, excessive allowances, dating customs, or teen-agers' use of the family car.

You may have to start off with rules to govern these situations, preferably rules that young people have a hand in drawing up. Sociologists have learned one thing in dealing with problems of minorities: You cannot compel people to change their feelings toward another group, but you can compel them to obey certain rules of fairness and decency in public speech and action. Such enforcement may—in fact, does—eventually bring about a change of feeling.

Finally, young people and grownups both need to admit frankly, to themselves and each other, the pressures they do feel. Undoubtedly the generations will differ. David Riesman, in his book *The Lonely Crowd*, pictures the generation born before 1900 as "inner directed," the present generation as "other directed." That is, young people today feel less strictly accountable to parents and to early training and more accountable to their own contemporaries—especially for standards on how to adjust, to make a good appearance, to be a "decent guy," and so on. They are more sensitive to the opinions of their age mates, hence more subject to fads and fashions. And naturally the more extra money they have, the greater their chance to indulge in idiotic crazes and conformities.

This is also the time, however, when young people can, through discussion and teaching, learn to view these group influences objectively and gradually free themselves of the more unreasonable vagaries of teen-age fashion and opinion. Many of them may take some long steps toward independence of thought and action. Many may come a little closer to being "substantially great within thyself."

*Joseph K. Folsom, outstanding pioneer in the parent education movement and formerly a member of the Board of Managers of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, is professor of sociology at Vassar College. He has written several important books on family life, including the well-known *The Family and Democratic Society*.*



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THE VERDICT IS

Victory!

SALK VACCINE A SUCCESS

Dr. Salk and the precious serum.

"THE VACCINE WORKS. It is safe, effective, and potent." The news flashed over the wires on the morning of April 12, 1955. Within minutes headlines were bringing the message to fathers and mothers everywhere.

Medical history has been made. April 12 marked a turning point in one of the stubbornest battles science has faced—the fight against polio. In the vaccine developed in the laboratory of Jonas E. Salk, M.D., we now have a powerful weapon against a crippler that is centuries old.

This great scientific triumph was first revealed to a waiting world by Thomas Francis, Jr., M.D., one of the nation's top virus experts. From the Rackham Auditorium at the University of Michigan Dr. Francis announced that the Salk vaccine is 80 to 90 per cent effective against all three types of polio. Dr. Salk, who was on the platform with Dr. Francis, had more good news. Since last year's field trials the vaccine itself has been greatly improved. The new serum should be almost 100 per cent effective in protecting children against the polio virus.

The verdict announced at Ann Arbor adds up to a go-ahead signal for mass inoculations throughout the country. Physicians, health departments, and manufacturers of the vaccine are already planning for the gigantic task. School children in the first and second grades will be given shots immediately.

While polio strikes people of all ages, its chief victims have been children. Boys and girls and their mothers and fathers have borne most of the burden of our long helplessness against infantile paralysis. It is they to whom Dr. Salk brings the greatest relief from anxiety. From now on the words "Mommie, I have a headache; my neck feels stiff" won't throw us into panic as they once did. From now on we shall not face the summer months with dread. Let June, July, August, and September come. They will no longer bring the sickening suspense of other summers. This summer millions of children can shout and play freely and happily in the sunshine. Their

parents can lay aside the paralyzing fear that out of somewhere a virus may strike that can still a child's laughter, take away his freedom to romp, bind and distort his young muscles.

To the roster of the great benefactors of mankind—a roster of such names as Pasteur, Jenner, Harvey, Fleming—must now be added the name of Jonas E. Salk. It was he who made the victory possible. This quiet scientist, who lists as his hobby "my work," had the determination, the drive, and the research skill that the challenge called for.

We are indebted for the vaccine not only to Dr. Salk and the scientists who worked before him and beside him, but also to the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. The Foundation granted Dr. Salk more than a million dollars to carry out his study. And these funds came from the pockets of countless men and women and children who hopefully chose to put their dollars and dimes to work against this dread disease.

The Foundation was created by Franklin D. Roosevelt; it was by design that the results of the vaccine were announced on the tenth anniversary of his death.

We of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers have always worked closely with the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. For years we have kept our members informed of the Foundation's unrelenting search for a weapon against polio. During the last two years the *National Parent-Teacher* has carried a series of articles on the progress of Dr. Salk's vaccine research. Writing in the December 1953 issue, Hart E. Van Riper, M.D., pointed out that developments were so promising that 1954 might well be the year of decision for polio. Last summer P.T.A. members throughout the country participated in the field trials, and this year again we have gladly dedicated our resources to the inoculation program. Today, with the rest of mankind, we rejoice that one more dark fear has been lifted from our hearts and our homes.

What Emotional Health Looks Like

Bonaro W. Overstreet



© H. Armstrong Roberts

IF A person has lost the power to be amazed at himself—at his changing yet constant self—he has, in effect, lost the power to be amazed at life. If he has lost or never developed the power to value himself, enjoy himself, and feel the drama of the forces that move within him, he is not likely to set a high value upon other people or upon human experience.

To put the matter another way, we cannot have a sound attitude toward human nature in general if we have an unsound attitude toward that portion of it we are most intimately privileged to know. This fact is one that modern psychology has heavily underscored. In so doing, it has helped to clarify much that we have never before understood about emotional health and ill health.

It has helped us to understand, for example, that if a person has no real sense of individual identity—no sense of being *whole*—but is all at sixes and sevens, his responses to other people will also be a hodgepodge of contradictions.

It has helped us to understand that his ways of treating others will reflect his judgment upon himself. They will reveal, as we say, his "self-image." In them we can read his self-confidence or lack of it, his state of being at peace or at war with himself.

It has helped us to understand that if he is bored with life, he is actually bored *with his own relationship to life*. He may never discover this fact. To the end of his days he may remain convinced that his environment has held no promise, has extended to him no invitation worth accepting. This assumption chiefly tells us, however, that he has never actually invested his own capacities in his environment.

For a generation or more we've been preoccupied, in school and out, with the social—social consciousness, social relations, social problems. And rightly so. Yet rightly too, today's emphasis on the relationship between ourselves and our world renews our interest in the individual self.

9. The Sense of Individual Identity

The Marvel That We Are

It is interesting to ask ourselves—our familiar daily selves—what there is in us, as samples of human nature, to be surprised about, to enjoy, and to respect.

The first example that comes to my own mind in the face of that question is ordinary enough, and yet it is as mysterious as life itself. As I was running the vacuum cleaner over the living room rug the other day, I found myself humming a tune that I could not at first identify. I knew it, but realized that it was one I had not thought of for a long time. Suddenly, however, it fell into place in my memory. Of course. It was the favorite song of a certain stage performer who, some thirty years ago, in a town where I was then teaching, had put on brief dramatizations of various melodies at the local motion picture house, preceding the nightly feature. Not only did I thus recall where I had learned the tune; I could virtually hear again the man's voice as he sang it and could see again the dramatic "routine" with which he had accompanied it. I could visualize the backdrop against which he had acted and the way the spotlight had made for him a circle of illumination within the theater's dimness.

Where had that memory lain for thirty years? What brought it back to me, with a kind of total irrelevance, in the midst of my stint of house cleaning? And how did the tune call up from nowhere the image of a man performing within a circle of light on a long forgotten stage? If I could answer those questions—which I cannot, except in a way that may sound scientific but still leaves them largely a riddle

—I would know a good deal more than I do about myself and other human beings. I would understand how we are all shaped by memories that are "built into ourselves." We may not even know they are there—never at all, perhaps, or not until some tune or some face or some fragrance pulls them suddenly into consciousness again. It is astonishing to realize that one is made not only of flesh and blood and bone but of intangible memories.

Or I think of a very different kind of astonishment. I made a cheese soufflé for dinner the other evening. I made it easily, without any anxious concern about the what and how of its creation and with a comfortable assurance that it would come out as I expected. But I can remember when the making of a soufflé was for me a tense undertaking with no predictable outcome. What makes me, as a human organism, able to acquire knowledge and skill and to establish in mind—and body the smooth movements of expertness? If I really knew that about myself, I would know much.

Or to take a still different example. Not long ago, in a town where we were lecturing, my husband and I went into a certain office to talk with a certain man, a stranger, about a matter with which we were deeply concerned. An hour later we left that office, and the man was a stranger no longer. Almost immediately, before we had said more than a few sentences, something had "clicked" between us—some understanding, some sense of shared values that had made all three of us ready to go far beyond courteous commonplaces and to talk together of what we profoundly believed and cared about. It is astonishing

to belong to a species equipped for understanding, affection, and shared dedication.

And it is astonishing to be able to renew our individual courage and resolution by recalling a statement made by a man who has been dead for more than a thousand years; to be able to stand at the window of our own house, looking out into the garden, and looking with the mind's eye at a place a continent away; or to be able to stand in history's present moment and make plans for a time that does not yet exist. It is astonishing to be an integrated, durable, changing personality—not like any other personality on earth and yet like all human beings that have ever been born.

On Being One's Self

The sense of individual identity is, in essence, the experience of being a *defined self* within whom a constellation of human powers, never wholly fixed but dependable enough to be relied upon, makes for a certain characteristic constancy of attitude and behavior. I am I. And because I am myself and not this other person, I can expect that I will do this and not do that.

Modern psychologists and psychiatrists—particularly those who deal with "problem" children—have made us keenly aware that a human being can exist as a living organism and yet have no secure and happy sense of individual identity. He *is*; but he does not feel himself as distinctive and whole, and therefore he cannot count on himself to perform in one way rather than another.

Briefly we might note here three types of persons who seem not to have a sufficiently reliable sense of individual identity so that they can build flexible, confident relationships to life.

In the first place, there are those who seem unable to resist any influence from the outside. They are curiously at the mercy of anyone or any circumstance that impinges upon them. The opinion they hold on any given subject is simply the most recent one they have heard or read. They seem not to know what they think or feel or want until they are told or until they see what someone else is going to do. They go

through life trying to do, without inner check or consistency, whatever they think is expected of them. Their emotional security has for its nourishment only such crumbs and crusts of approval as other people may toss to them.

Then there is what seems to be a quite opposite type—the person so rigid that he appears to make no adaptive response to his environment but merely to wall himself off from its influence. Superficially such a person may be judged to be a "strong" character and well defined. Actually, however, he is not strong and defined enough to run the risks of letting life impinge upon him. The individual of genuine strength and well-established identity can afford to be flexible, to lend himself to his world with interest and to respond sensitively to its possibilities. The rigid person is one, we might say, who dares not relax for a moment the defenses he has built around his uncertain self.

In the third place, there is the type of person who is so full of inner contradictions, so at war with himself, that there is never any telling what response he will make; it all depends upon which "self" is momentarily in power.

Self Meets World

We build our lives—this cannot be said too often—by what we think, feel, and do, not within some abstract "limbo" but within one or another social and physical setting. We build our lives by the manner in which our individual powers are used and developed in relation to persons, objects, materials, and situations.

How we will use our powers—how we *can* use them—will largely depend on our expectations of success or failure, happiness or unhappiness, acceptance or rejection. And these expectations in turn will be a report on our own self-estimate, on the kind of person we think we are and deeply feel ourselves to be.

Not only the beginning of wisdom, then, but the beginning of happiness and of a contributive relationship to the society in which we live is the building of a firm, flexible, self-respecting sense of individual identity.

FOR A LIFETIME OF MENTAL HEALTH

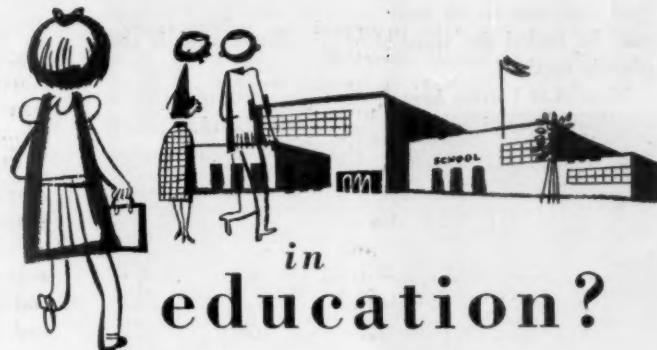
This is the positive goal of the 1955-56 parent education program for study-discussion groups, which will begin in the September *National Parent-Teacher*. It was in the logic of events that this goal should have been chosen, for everywhere today thoughtful men and women are deeply concerned with the building and maintaining of mental health. As in former years this parent education program will consist of three separate courses—one dealing with preschool children, one with school-age children, and the third with adolescents.

What have we learned about mental health and how it can be achieved? In these three series of articles, wise and experienced child guidance specialists will point out new avenues leading toward lifelong mental health. Among the topics they will discuss are "Assignment: Growing Up," "Can They Be Spoiled by Love?" "When Children Need Comforting," "Answers to Questions About Reading," "Is 'Gangbusting' Wise?" "The Secret Life of School Children," "Why Do They Act Like That?" "Helping Them over Hurdles," and "Can Their Hearts Be Young and Gay?"

The complete list of monthly topics will be announced on the back cover of the June issue.



What's happening



in education?

• *Have you seen the movie The Blackboard Jungle? Or read that awful book? Why should anyone want to put out anything like that? How can we ever recruit teachers when schools are shown as filled with young gangsters?—I. B.*

Yes, I have seen *The Blackboard Jungle* and read the book. I have talked about it with New York educators. As I write, the superintendent of schools of New York City, Dr. Jansen, has just gone on the air over the board of education radio station with a program to all schools to correct the impressions left by this film story.

For those of you who haven't caught up with it, *The Blackboard Jungle* is a Hollywood gangster story in a school setting. Juveniles in a metropolitan high school make up the "mob," and in place of the "private eye" or D.A. we see a devoted young teacher. (This is some improvement. In gangster pictures all the law ever does is lock up or erase the malefactors. Here the teacher reforms them.)

You may have read a much-scrubbed-up version of *The Blackboard Jungle* in the *Ladies' Home Journal*. The original book by Evan Hunter, a young writer who spent seventeen days as a substitute teacher in New York schools, is definitely not for ladies.

The picture opens with a new teacher (Glenn Ford), a young veteran who believes in the importance of education, beginning his career in what we are told is a vocational school. It is a far cry from most vocational schools, which have long since ceased to be a dumping ground for misfits from the academic high schools. Rick Dadier's class of overgrown young roughnecks gives him the kind of hazing we used to associate with frontier schools, and they defy him to teach them anything. After he blocks an attack by one of the boys on a woman teacher, the mob catches him and a fellow teacher in an alley and gives them a super-Hollywood beating. The prospect of going to jail worries the boys not at all; it may mean escape from military service.

Teacher Dadier grits his teeth and refuses to give up. He tries various devices to get through the bar-

riers these boys have built up. The story tells us that he succeeds with different techniques (audio-visual) and through school activities (a pick-up choral group). At the climax one young unreformed delinquent draws a knife, but the leader of the "mob" saves the teacher, who has won him over.

That's the story presented on the screen with all the grim realism of *On the Waterfront*. It could be called *Education's Lower Depths*. As a viewer you will react as the producers expect you to. You will cringe; you will be outraged. You will feel as if you had been struck across the face. Apparently people like to feel that way, because both the film and the book attract large audiences.

But what shall we think about *The Blackboard Jungle* in calmer moments? Once again, it seems to me, Hollywood has missed a chance to tell us something truly important about our young people, ourselves, and our schools. It has missed because the story resorts to such extremes that viewers will say "This doesn't happen in my school or my town!"

How regrettable—because the story does contain a vital grain of universal truth. In our classrooms there are many students who resist learning. The military draft does leave boys in a dangerous vacuum at their most active age. Overworked, underpaid teachers, facing teen-agers who don't want to learn, do develop frustration and an "I don't care" attitude. Some capable writer, we may hope, will tackle this problem once again, holding up a mirror in which we can truly recognize ourselves.

• *Why don't you write something about the new book called Why Johnny Can't Read? The author, Rudolf Flesch, says that in England children are taught to read by the age of five. If that can be done in England, why can't it be done here?—Mrs. A. Y.*

Your correspondent will now take a deep breath and dive bravely, if not wisely, into one of the hottest controversies of our times.

Roughly the issue is this: Should we begin to teach reading by recognition of whole words or by breaking words into syllables and learning that *bath, baby*,

bad, bat, and so on start with *ba* sounds? The first may be called the word method. The second is the phonic method.

Note that I stress *begin*. Most advocates of modern reading instruction techniques do not abandon phonics. They wish to postpone this phase of instruction until about the third grade.

No step in education concerns parents more deeply. The day when Johnny first reads ranks in importance beside the day when he first walks. They know that learning to read unlocks the world for Johnny, that his skill in reading largely determines his future success in the world. Parents are understandably impatient when teachers say, "Leave it to us. Johnny will read when he is ready to read—perhaps in the first grade but possibly in the second or even the third. Don't worry."

But of course parents do worry, and some may be tempted to follow the short cut proposed by Dr. Flesch. However, you don't accept a guide for an important journey without looking into his qualifications. So let's look at those of our author.

Rudolf Flesch received his doctor's degree from Teachers College, Columbia University. He specializes in the techniques of reading and writing and has written several books on the subject, including *The Art of Plain Talk*. He has served as consultant to newspapers, magazines, and the U.S. government on ways of making writing readable. But Dr. Flesch up to now has focused on *adult* reading, not beginning reading. He writes, "A few weeks ago I spent two days in the library at Teachers College, Columbia University, tracking down every single reference to a study of 'phonics vs. no phonics.'" Two days, Dr. Flesch! And his book, which blasts reading instruction currently used, discloses that he has devoted only a few months to research that has occupied the attention of other specialists for a lifetime.

Nevertheless he seems to have no hesitation in adopting a position completely opposed to the almost unanimous view of experts who have devoted their academic lives to this key problem of education. One basic defect in the phonic approach appears in the exercises appended to *Why Johnny Can't Read*. Exercise 10 starts with *can, kiss, cub, kid, cob, kill*. The sound of "c" and "k" is similar, but the symbol for the sound differs. Unfortunately English is filled with such spelling "misdemeanors." Experts argue that to introduce the very young child to this welter of confusion is a mistake. Let phonics come later, they urge. Of Dr. Flesch as a guide to the teaching of reading *Elementary English* says this:

It is tempting to enumerate the fallacies, misinterpretations, and distortions of fact that abound in this little book. . . . Most serious of Dr. Flesch's errors is his outrageous oversimplification of the problem itself. To him reading consists exclusively of the power of word recognition. He does not refer to the problems of comprehension and interpretation of meaning derived from words

in combination. Indeed, he is not concerned even with the meaning of individual words. Although his indifference to thought processes in reading is reflected on almost every page, the following quotations most effectively illustrates his incredibly superficial concept of the reading process:

"I once surprised a native of Prague by reading aloud from a Czech newspaper. 'Oh, you know Czech?' he asked. 'No, I don't understand a word of it,' I answered. 'I can only read it.'

• *We have some trouble in our community with "bad" boys and girls, but they are not the ones whose parents attend P.T.A. meetings. Usually these youngsters come from families where both the mother and father work and are so tired that they don't go to meetings. Their children run around the streets after school because they have no place to go. How do we reach the parents?*—W. Z.

It isn't easy. This column invites letters from P.T.A.'s that have discovered practical ways and means of making contact with working parents. Here are some methods worthy of attention that have been developed successfully by schools and parent-teacher associations:

Teacher-parent interviews. Many schools, such as those in Chicago, have introduced the teacher-parent interview—and also the anecdotal or personal letter from the teacher—as an alternative to the old-fashioned report card. Almost every parent will respond when the teacher invites him to come and talk about his child. (What, I wonder, is the policy of business and industry on granting time off for such interviews? And do the schools adapt their schedules so that teachers may have time to talk to parents either during the day or in the evening?)

Late-afternoon play schools and supervised recreation. Some communities, led by P.T.A.'s, provide supervision for "latchkey" children—that is, children who are sent off to school with the latchkey on a string around their neck. A play school where boys and girls can go after school and stay until the working parents return home avoids the inevitable trouble that comes when youngsters roam the streets. Through such a school the parent-teacher association is often able to reach the children's parents.

A parent-teacher bulletin. Some school systems send non-P.T.A. mothers and fathers a monthly newsletter or bulletin containing information vital to parents. Such a periodical keeps in touch with all parents of all children in the school. It seems to work best when run by a P.T.A. editorial committee made up of both teachers and parents. The parent members of the editorial committee can be depended on to see that the content and the writing appeal to other parents—and to follow through with further contacts.

What other methods work? We'd like to hear from you.

—WILLIAM D. BOUTWELL

TELEVISION-

TWO-FACED MIRACLE

Useful servant? Insidious master?

Which is it in your home?

© Ewing Galloway

Harriett C. Carrière and Albert Carrière

IF WE two parents are agreed on anything, it is that television is a constant miracle at which we shall never cease to marvel. To hear some of our friends talking, however, you'd think the mere presence of a television set in any home was a sure sign that its younger viewers were destined to become hardened criminals.

We've had our set three years now, and we have gone through a process of adjustment—by no means an easy one. After much thought and trial and error, we have arrived at the happy state where television is no longer master in our home but a servant.

Like so many well-meaning parents, when we first bought our set we allowed the children to turn it on at will. It was a novelty, not only for the children but for us as well. Living in a Chicago suburb, we were in one of the finest reception zones in the country, with four channels to choose from and many programs to be sampled.

Yet several things developed which made us realize very quickly the folly of indiscriminate viewing. For one thing, the children would raise a row if we attempted to get them away from the set. They became gangster and cowboy crazy, going so far as to imitate the mannerisms and speech of certain reprehensible characters. They grew more and more pugnacious, ready to fight at the flimsiest opportunity.

What concerned us most was that the constant use of television disrupted many of the things we had enjoyed as a family in B.T. (Before Television) days: reading aloud, playing chess, listening to records, and so on. Like other parents, we wanted our children to have as serene a home life as possible in this age of intensified anxiety. We also wanted them

to remember in later years that their father and mother had read to them nightly and that in their home they had been exposed to some of the world's fine music and literature.

Taming the Monster

The situation got quite out of control, and we suddenly found our lives being dominated by an electronic monster in a mahogany cabinet. One night, after a particularly stormy session with our two sons, we decided something had to be done to restore domestic tranquillity.

Our first impulse was to get rid of the set. By such an act, however, we would not be meeting the problem, merely postponing or avoiding it. Moreover, we would be placing much too much importance on a television set, giving it a significance and a dignity of which it was not worthy. No, it would never do to move it out of our home. We must look for another solution.

We felt, to begin with, that we were entirely to blame for what was happening because we had thoughtlessly allowed the boys free rein with this intriguing new source of entertainment. On the other hand, we were not of a mind to let the situation continue. So we called a family conference with Peter, aged ten, and Chris, aged six.

We, the parents, took the floor long enough to put the problem to the boys. The sponsors of television shows, we told them, were not particularly concerned with whether or not they made a shambles of our family life. That matter was up to us. It was up to us to decide on how to use television in the best possible way for all of us and our life together.

A Cooperative Code

The boys saw our point, and after a fairly long and concentrated huddle, we came out with a TV code for the whole family. For our own benefit and convenience we wrote it down in the form of nine rules, though Chris, of course, had to have it read aloud for his final approval.

The first three rules apply entirely to the boys:

1. Neither boy may turn on the television set without first asking if he may do so and the boy who asks must know what program he wants to watch. (This made Peter aware that there is a weekly television program printed in the newspapers and, incidentally, made him realize that the newspapers contain other things of interest to children besides cartoons and comic strips.)

2. There should be no television immediately after school or during the afternoon until a reasonable period has been spent outdoors, especially in fine weather. (If the weather is bad, this rule can be disregarded—though we parents don't encourage constant reliance on television as a pastime even on rainy days. Instead we urge the boys to organize their own leisure-time activities.)

3. On school nights the curfew for Chris' television watching is seven o'clock; for Peter, eight o'clock. On Fridays and Saturdays, Chris may watch until eight-thirty; Peter, until nine-thirty.

The rest of the code applies equally to all of us.

4. The choice of evening programs must be unanimous. If we grownups think a horror play is too horrendous or a so-called comedy plain vulgar, we have the right to turn it off. On the other hand, Peter sometimes complains that our choice of programs bores him. When this happens, we ask him to find something better—though, again, we must all agree that it is better. If we can't agree, we usually wind up by playing some of our favorite records (a wonderful antidote to television, by the way).

The exception to this rule has to do with our privileges as parents. If we two adults really want to see something, even if it may bore our sons, we see it. Life being a process of constant adjustment to others, we feel that this is one way our children can find out what that process is right in their own home.

5. There should be no television at mealtime. We firmly believe that the dinner hour is important in achieving the feeling of oneness that should exist in every family.

6. We parents should give the children a reasonable warning before asking them to turn off television. Whenever possible, we try to time things so that they may finish watching a particular program.

7. This rule sets aside two or three quiet evenings a week—family evenings, as it were—when there shall be no television. This does not mean that we cannot or do not enjoy television as a family, for we have a number of favorite programs that we all watch together. But the no-television evenings provide serenity. (Also we didn't want to get into the terrible habit of rushing to the television set after dinner each night.)

8. We agree not to become so addicted to any one program that we regulate our lives in order to watch it. If there is a regular program that we all like and can view without disturbing our normal family living, that is just fine. But we do not postpone trips, hurry home from anywhere, refuse to chat with friends who have dropped in unexpectedly, or change any of our usual activities for the sake of a television program. If a friend drops in

while the boys are watching a program, they are expected to ask him if he objects to their seeing the rest of the show. After it is over, they turn off the set.

9. This isn't really a rule. It provides that all the other rules are flexible and that sometimes exceptions will be in order. For example, we have several times violated the rule about television at mealtime—once to listen to President Eisenhower and another time to watch *Peter Pan*.

So far we think these rules have worked pretty successfully. At least we are satisfied that as a family we have made a good beginning. We have all decided that whoever violates a rule should be deprived of a day or two of television. But we seldom have any violations, probably because these are our rules, and we have a proprietary feeling toward them.

Benefits and By-products

Certainly since adopting our TV code, we have had a more satisfying experience as a family. There have been few outbursts of resentment when the boys have been asked to stop watching a terror play or a cheap comedian or when any program has been turned off because of its offensive nature. And the children are taking more time to select their programs. Since there are two or three nights when they may not watch television, they weigh the merits of each evening's entertainment with particular care.

We have been especially gratified by one by-product of our campaign to keep television from becoming an opiate. Our children are developing a sharper awareness of values, a keener judgment. Peter, for instance, has often commented on the absurd and inconsistent claims made by some of the advertisers. He and Chris laugh loudly at the more ludicrous commercials. We tried to explain to them that they ought not to condemn all advertising, because some of it was in good taste. We also pointed out that it was the advertising that paid for the programs they enjoyed. But Peter just snorted. Then he made a comment that ought to be passed on to all advertising copywriters: "Sure, Dad, maybe so. But gosh! How dumb do they think we are?"

Television need not be a problem. It is perfectly possible to enjoy it and at the same time lead a varied family existence. When you decide at the outset that this electronic marvel is not going to run you and your family but that you are going to run and control the television set, you'll find you can enrich your family life together. We were able to do it. So can you.

Harriett and Albert Carrière are two busy parents who somehow find time for P.T.A. work, scouting activities, and Sunday school teaching. Both are also writers. Mrs. Carrière has done publicity for the Girl Scouts, and Mr. Carrière, a public relations specialist, has published plays for children, professional articles, and short stories.

Worth a Try



P.T.A. on the Line

In Washington, D. C., you can find out about the P.T.A. as easily as you can keep tab on the time and the weather. Simply dial PT 3-5833, and presto! you'll get a half-minute summary of the latest P.T.A. news. If you have P.T.A. news of your own to pass on, you simply talk it into the phone. Your message is recorded on the spot and played back to those who dial in after you.

Statistics That Sting

"Traffic accidents killed sixty people in our town last year." A simple two-digit figure like this may stir scarcely a ripple of interest among citizens accustomed to tragedy statistics mounting into the tens of thousands. How can the grim toll of the highways be so reported that it will sting sensibilities and spur action? From the National Safety Council comes an account of how one group of aroused men and women dramatized their town's record of sixty traffic deaths a year. These safety-minded citizens presented the story in all its poignancy by a public display of sixty pairs of empty shoes.

Baby-sitting Is a Specialty

Baby-sitting takes know-how. Fifty boys and girls in Ellensburg, Washington, can tell you this. They have taken the course in baby-sitting sponsored by the Ellensburg Council of Parent-Teacher Associations. Six one-hour sessions covered topics ranging from sitters' wages to safety-first rules in caring for infants. The students—all of them in junior or senior high school—were also briefed on games, storytelling, behavior problems, and labor-management relations. The closing session included a film on baby-sitting and a talk on grooming. Standing by to

answer questions were parent education teachers, a nursery school teacher, and mothers of preschool children. The Y.M.C.A. and an interested resident are cooperating in the project by maintaining a clearinghouse of jobs for sitters who have completed the course.

Locked-in Flavor

Do you like your coffee full flavored? If so, keep it in the refrigerator. The tip comes from Dr. Samuel G. Prescott of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Coffee owes its flavor to tiny bubbles of carbon dioxide gas locked inside coffee particles. In warm temperatures these gas bubbles expand and escape. Cold air, on the other hand, locks in the gas and with it the pungent coffee flavor.

Young Guests for Lunch

"We should know our high school students far better than we do." On this point service clubs in one community were in vigorous agreement. But how could they make a start? "Why not break bread together?" a businessman suggested. "We could each invite a student to our weekly luncheons. It would be a treat for our young guests, and since we meet for lunch anyway we wouldn't be overburdening already crowded schedules." The plan met with hearty approval, and invitations were promptly sent out. On the luncheon day each member of the various clubs—Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis, Optimists—called for his high school guest and took him back. Through these noonday luncheons the businessmen did come to know the boys better, and the plan had another effect too. The visits to the school gave many of the hosts firsthand knowledge of the school program. In fact, some of them were so taken with the work in vocational guidance that they pitched in and

offered their services as consultants for the school's career-day conferences.

Edible Toothbrush

Brush your teeth immediately after each meal, dentists advise. Though the counsel is not always easy to follow, teen-agers who prize attractive teeth are heeding it. Some of them who must eat meals away from home carry folding tooth brushes, reports Mrs. Bertha Morgan, former dental hygienist in the U.S. Public Health Service. Speaking at a postgraduate clinic of the district of Columbia Dental Society, she had a suggestion for mothers of children who don't want to be encumbered with pocket equipment. Tuck into their lunch box an edible toothbrush—a dessert of celery, apples, or raw carrots, foods excellent for cleaning teeth. In a final word on diet and dental health, Mrs. Morgan urged mothers to serve children "chewy" breads made of whole grain cereal, breads like 100 per cent whole wheat.

One Question—Many Answers

For millions of children summertime is play time. In more than one neighborhood, however, the big question, "come warm weather, is "Where will they play?" This same query is emblazoned in big bold letters across the new spring posters of the National Recreation Association. Do you have something to say on the subject? Do you want to announce the date of the opening of your summer playgrounds? Or invite residents to enjoy their public parks? Or call attention to your town's need for public play centers? Any of these or other messages may be entered on the poster. The artists who designed it left plenty of space for your additions. Posters are available at twenty cents each from the National Recreation Association, 8 West Eighth Street, New York 11, New York.

Immunization During Infancy

An Interview with a Noted Pediatrician

Louis W. Sauer, M.D.

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Just what is included today in the term *immunization procedures* when we apply it to infants and children?

The old adage "Many ways lead to Rome" is quite applicable here because the procedures used by private physicians, well-baby clinics, health departments, schools, camps, and orphanages do not follow a fixed schedule or sequence. Yet everyone who uses them has the same purpose in mind—to protect our young against needless infections. Perhaps you will get a better idea of these procedures if I go back to the oldest ones and tell you how they came into use.

• Which immunization procedure came first?

That takes us back a long time, more than a hundred and fifty years. It was in 1798 that Dr. Edward Jenner of London described to the medical world a method whereby smallpox could be prevented: If a young child were successfully vaccinated with cowpox virus, he would not contract smallpox when he later became exposed to it.

• Was smallpox prevalent then?

Yes, indeed. Devastating epidemics swept over Europe periodically, with a very high toll of human life, much suffering, and permanent pockmarks on the faces of those who survived.

• Were the doctors convinced of the value of vaccination?

No, most of them were skeptical for quite some time. Very little was known about asepsis and antiseptics in those days, and therefore a secondary infection of the vaccination frequently occurred.

• Is our technique of vaccination different today than it was in Dr. Jenner's time?

The principle has remained the same, but today we take many precautions to prevent secondary infections. The virus we now use is free from contaminants. The skin is cleansed with a suitable antiseptic. The scratching of the skin is very superficial, and the

excess vaccine is aseptically wiped away. Nowadays when the blister forms, a shield is no longer used, because air will hasten the drying of the blister into a hard, dark scab. Keeping the vaccination dry for several weeks helps prevent secondary infection and makes the scar smaller.

• Is the red area around the blister normal?

Yes, a red area from one to three inches in diameter is quite often a natural response to vaccination. So is a transient fever running as high as 104 F. If we keep the child quiet and give him more water and less food than usual, together with a dose or two of aspirin, the duration of these reactions can be shortened. As a rule, when a person is vaccinated a second time, there is seldom any redness or fever because he is usually still immune. And as you know, untold millions of lives have been saved by the prevention of smallpox.

• What immunization procedure came next, Doctor?

Diphtheria had been a killer of young lives all through the ages until the German physician Emil von Behring perfected a diphtheria antitoxin in 1899. Before that the disease was usually fatal within a few days after the symptoms developed.

• What is this antitoxin?

Von Behring first injected an old cab horse with increasing doses of the diphtheria germs. After a time, he drew some blood from the animal. And in the fluid part of the horse's blood, the serum, he found the specific antitoxin that proved so helpful in treatment. Later on, an extract of the diphtheria germs (toxin) was used instead.

• Why do we seldom hear about diphtheria antitoxin today?

Because when an infant is injected with several minute doses of the diluted toxin (now toxoid), he develops his own immunity. We have discovered, too,

and Childhood



© Elisabeth Hibbs

that adding a minute trace of alum brings a better, longer lasting immunity. Now we can give the injections not only earlier but also in smaller doses. Another reason we do not give the antitoxin is that it didn't always work. Sometimes the patient suffered severe reactions, especially if he happened to be an allergic individual.

• **What is "triple antigen"?**

Diphtheria toxoid is now combined with whooping cough (pertussis) vaccine and lockjaw (tetanus) toxoid. Such a combination is often called *triple antigen* (DTP) against diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis.

• **But why start the shots so early, Doctor?**

Chiefly because whooping cough has always been most serious in infants. Up to about twenty years ago it, too, took many young lives and caused numerous complications. We start as early as possible, therefore, so as to protect the child—and also because a certain length of time must elapse after the last dose before active immunity is complete.

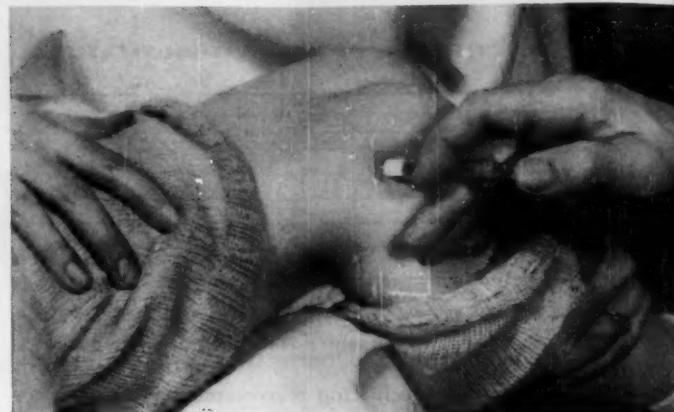
But why are several shots necessary and what about the child's reactions to them?

• Does mixing the three antigens cause more of a reaction, such as fever?

We have learned much from the immunization technique long used to prevent typhoid fever. With this vaccine it has been established that three doses, at intervals of a week or more, cause less reaction and produce a higher immunity level.

We almost never hear about a baby's contracting lockjaw. Why give him tetanus toxoid?

It is true that young children rarely get lockjaw. However, in World War II it was found that soldiers and sailors who had been injected with the basic and booster doses of tetanus toxoid seldom developed lockjaw. The best results were in the Navy, where alum-containing toxoid was used.



© Louis W. Sauer, M.D.

• **Why start so early with tetanus shots, then?**

For a very good reason. When the tetanus toxoid is combined with the other two antigens, it does not increase the severity of the reaction to the diphtheria toxoid and the whooping cough vaccine; yet it spares the parent the inconvenience and the child the discomfort of three additional shots later in life. Indeed, many children would not be protected at all, simply because of procrastination—a not uncommon trait.

• **What reactions should parents expect after a child's DTP doses?**

How the child reacts will depend on various factors, such as the dose, the age of the child, and whether or not he is allergic. High fever occurs less frequently when alum-containing DTP is used, but the local reactions—that is, those at the site of injection—may be more pronounced.

• **In young infants, where are the shots injected?**

It is now customary to use alternate buttocks.

• **Why down there, rather than on the arms?**

There are several reasons. The young infant's arms are often very thin, for one thing. More important is the fact that the infant won't be quite so fearful if he can't see what is happening. His mother can cuddle down closely over his exposed ear at the moment the dose is injected. He cries, yes, but usually by the time the diaper is readjusted and he gets a good hug from Mother, the crying stops.

• **What can a mother do to lessen a child's reactions?**

Keep him out of the intense sunlight and offer him water repeatedly. If he is feverish or very restless, give him one or more small doses of aspirin in a spoon of sugar water. If a local redness appears, don't apply wet dressings. Our techniques have been so improved that a cyst or an abscess seldom occurs.

CERTIFICATE OF ACTIVE IMMUNIZATIONS

NAME	Date of Birth							
	BASIC		BOOSTER 2 to 3 yrs. (before nursery school)		BOOSTER 3 to 6 yrs. (before school)		BOOSTER After exposure of previously immunized	
DISEASE	Date	Antigen	Date	Antigen	Date	Antigen	Date	Antigen
Diphtheria								
Tetanus								
Whooping Cough								
Smallpox								

The immunization certificate used by Dr. Sauer.

- How about booster doses? Why and when are they given?

Smallpox revaccination is recommended about every five to seven years, sooner if exposure to the disease is likely to occur—as for example, when traveling in a foreign country. It is quite customary for a child to have a single booster (or stimulating) dose of DTP before he goes to nursery school (at three to four years of age) and another single dose at school age (six to seven years). He is also given a booster dose immediately after an injury or after intimate exposure to diphtheria or whooping cough. At some emergency stations a single dose of fluid tetanus toxoid is administered after a previously immunized person has been injured, because it is supposed to stimulate immunity faster. On the other hand, if more than five years have elapsed since the last booster dose, it is questionable whether a booster dose would give adequate protection in case of a serious accident.

- Are reactions more severe after booster doses?

Yes. But nowadays we usually lessen the dose slightly in older children who have been given booster doses routinely, as I have described—especially when camp requirements specify an extra booster dose.

- Can parents do anything to lessen emotional tensions when an older child comes in for a booster shot?

The less said about the shot, the less anxious the child will be. Shortly before the dose is administered, Mother or Father may say casually, "When you were a baby the doctor gave you something that helped keep you well. You scarcely cried at all, even though you were very little. Today he is going to do the same thing. But this one little dose won't hurt you any more than a mosquito bite." The upper arms are often used for booster DTP shots and revaccination. Incidentally, smallpox revaccination causes no pain, nor will there be much of any reaction in the child who is immune.

- Why don't doctors give scarlet fever shots any more?

Because penicillin is so effective in treating the disease, should the child contract it.

- Are reactions to immunization shots more severe in prematurely born infants, frail ones, or those who have recently been ill?

Seldom is a dose given when there is a fever (that is, a rectal temperature above 100 F.) or during an acute infection of any kind. Physicians usually start the initial dose in premature or frail infants almost as early as they do in robust ones, but the doses are subdivided. This may mean a total of six or eight fractional doses, generally somewhat closer together than usual. Thus the infants who most need protection get it—and on time.

- I've heard quite a lot about "GG." What is it?

GG, or gamma globulin, is a useful by-product of blood banks. It contains variable amounts of several antibodies, especially those that work against such virus diseases as measles and polio. We use it to prevent or lighten the severity of those diseases in people who have been intimately exposed. However, this "passive" immunity is of short duration.

- Is GG used against other diseases too?

Yes, two in particular. When an expectant mother has been exposed to German measles during the first few months of pregnancy—especially if she has not had this disease during her childhood—her obstetrician may promptly administer fairly large doses of GG. In this way he lessens the chances of her child's having a congenital defect. GG is also used rather extensively to combat the spread of another virus disease—*infectious hepatitis*. Many physicians prefer to let healthy children contract virus diseases like measles, German measles, mumps, and chickenpox because the protection usually lasts for life.

- Like all parents I'm greatly excited about the Salk polio vaccine. At what intervals will the injections be given? Are there any unpleasant side reactions?

The first two doses will be administered four weeks apart and should be injected intramuscularly in alternate upper arms. The third dose will be given later than first announced. Dr. Salk believes that if the interval ranges from seven to ten months the immunity response is better and longer lasting. To date nothing is known about booster shots or about dosage for older children and adults. Most likely the side reactions will not be any more pronounced than they are after DTP and far less so than after the primary, or basic, smallpox vaccination.

Louis W. Sauer, M.D., originated the triple-antigen vaccine (DTP) he describes in this interview. It was this distinguished pediatrician, too, who perfected the method of immunizing babies against whooping cough and thus saved thousands of young lives. Dr. Sauer is associate professor of pediatrics, emeritus, at the Northwestern University Medical School.



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Are There Permanent Values in Progressive Education?

Hollis L. Caswell

President, Teachers College, Columbia University

PROGRESSIVE education receives few favorable comments today. In fact, it is viewed by many as an unfortunate, if not dangerous, movement. Recently as I heard a group discussing this situation, my thoughts turned back to the 1920's when, as a student at Teachers College, I first became acquainted with progressive education. I remember that its theories seemed sharply at variance with ideas which up to that time I had accepted as a matter of course.

I resisted these new conceptions as impractical and visionary, until I visited Lincoln School. There I was thrilled with what I saw. I myself had taught English, and it was an exciting experience to see what pupils were doing in creative writing under the guidance of Hughes Mearns. Poetry written under his stimulation opened up a whole new vista of the potentialities of high school boys and girls. The reading of Tom Prideaux's poem "Circus" still brings back that thrill to me. Some of you may recall his brief but striking word picture, which concludes with these lines:

*Careening through the polished paraphernalia
Like birds among the jungles of a dream,
The acrobats in glittering regalia
Dazzle life with their own sequins' gleam;

Then bowing when their lauded act is ended,
And tossing kisses, jaunty and so glib,
I wonder if they really comprehended
They've tickled Death along his bony rib?*

As I observed this new kind of education, my own teaching took on a new meaning. I remembered how nonplussed I had been upon receiving from one student, in lieu of an assigned English theme, a few

lines standing in the middle of a page. "Brain Fag" it was headed, and it ran like this:

The twilight wind blew softly through the branches. The western sky was crimson with the blood of dying sun. Spasmodically he contracted, as though in agony, and spattered the sky's azure gown. The sun was dying; I knew, but I didn't tell those foolish people over there. Let 'em wait; they'd see. . . .

The night wind gently touched my eyelids with mystic purple fingers; she touched my feverish head with musing, latent hands, and the hurt was lost in an unremembering sea—for I was so tired.

If only I had sensed the great possibilities of this student and been able to encourage and guide his development! This I said to myself as I pondered the new world of education that was revealed to me.

Progressive education in the 1920's and 1930's challenged tradition and provided a vision of a more humane and more meaningful education. It offered a frontier where pioneers could find challenge. It promised children and youth guidance toward fuller and more purposeful lives.

And now in 1955 we are told that those visions, those efforts were wrong. The movement that sparked them seems practically dead. How can it be that so many were so badly mistaken? Or were they mistaken?

The Case for Respect

One central belief of progressive education was that the child's personality should be respected quite as much as the adult's. It is difficult now to realize how much children were dominated by teachers in the old school. The pupil as a person had few, if any,

OUR COMMUNITY



rights. The schoolmaster could insult him, ridicule him, ignore his wishes and needs, set tasks and expectations beyond his maturity and ability, and freely use physical punishment to enforce his will. The result was a widespread dislike of school, which people still tend to view as normal.

Progressive education sought to change this by giving the pupil a respected place in the scheme of things. His opinions and wishes merited consideration. The teacher should be a helper and guide, not a dictator. This emphasis was supported by other forces in American life as well, but in the schools progressive education brought it sharply into focus.

It is not surprising that such a shift occasionally resulted in extreme procedures. As teachers sought to follow this ideal, pupils sometimes got out of hand. But they got out of hand in the old days too. Many a teacher who tried to control through corporal punishment was run out of school by the pupils.

We hear a great deal today about the need for more rigorous control of children and youth. The problem of juvenile delinquency—truly an appalling one—is often cited as proof of the failure of progressive education. Yet as far as I can determine, every bit of evidence that psychological science has built up over the years confirms the soundness of *respect for personality* as a basic guide in dealing with people of all ages.

It is my conviction that we must resist the counsel of those who would turn to repression as a means of controlling children. Progressive education, I believe, was on the right track. What we need is to profit from past mistakes and discover even more effective means than we now have of developing in all pupils a sense of personal worth and responsibility.

The Case for Children's Needs

Another basic idea of progressive education was the belief that education must be an active, purposeful process which gives central importance to the needs of pupils. This came as a reaction to an education in which subject matter was organized in logical sequences and learning was largely memorizing. Progressive education held that the child must come ahead of subject matter, that only as his purposes are recognized can learning be meaningful for him, and that only through his own activity can he learn. The passive type of classroom, in which pupils were forced to sit quietly hour after hour, memorizing materials to be recited to the teacher, was seen as a poor means of educating.

There can be no doubt that these concepts had a tremendous influence on American education. Classroom organization, activities, and school equipment were profoundly affected. In 1896, at the beginning of the progressive movement, John Dewey went from one school-supply store to another seeking, without success, classroom furniture that could be used in an active, varied program. He found only desks and seats that had to be fastened to the floor. Today it is impossible to buy such seats. School-supply houses vie with each other in providing equipment that can be readily adapted to a wide range of activities.

With the years it has become evident that guiding pupils into experiences that are truly purposeful for them is an extremely complex matter. Yet it is essential that pupils have such experiences. It is true that a child can gain meaning, develop attitudes, and acquire permanent skills only in relation to his present needs. It is indisputable that education is an active process and therefore that a good education must involve a variety of activities. Just how these ideals should be put into practice is the rub. But after all, "A man's reach should exceed his grasp," especially in education.

Still another concept of progressive education was that the schools should be concerned with the all-round development of pupils. Very early it gave great emphasis to creative abilities. Sculpture, painting, dramatics, music, and creative writing took on a new quality and a new role. In later years personal adjustment problems received special attention.

Not only was the curriculum greatly broadened, but the pupil was encouraged to organize his learning around problems that he himself felt. Thus subject-matter boundaries were crossed, and problems, projects, and units became the organizing centers of study.

The influence of progressive education on American schools was unquestionably great. Through the years there has been a slow but obvious broadening of concern for various aspects of pupils' growth. Forces other than progressive education also stimu-

lated this trend, notably the home. Parents seemed anxious for the school to assume more responsibility in guiding their children's development.

Some critics of modern education insist that the school should return to its original function—intellectual development. These critics argue that in trying to provide for all phases of pupils' development the school is failing seriously in what should be its central purpose. On the other hand, it becomes more evident year by year that we cannot deal with one part of an individual at a time. The intellect never functions alone. Emotions, physical status, attitudes—all enter into every situation to some extent. And so it seems poor counsel to recommend that schools devote exclusive attention to intellectual achievement, leaving guidance in other phases of growth to the home, the church, and the rest of the community.

Yet the plain fact is that the school, even with teachers of the greatest competence, simply cannot provide for the all-round development of children. Herein lies the critical importance of the home. Given a good home with wise and understanding parents, a child can survive many bad influences in school and community and develop a wholesome personality. But a negligent home provides a handicap extremely difficult to overcome. One of the tragedies of our time is that the American home has abdicated to so great a degree its responsibility for the guidance of children.

Any educational policy that encourages this tendency is, in my judgment, bad. Yet if other institutions fail to do their part, the schools must fill in the gaps as best they can. Perhaps a systematic exploration of areas of responsibility might yield a setting for co-operative action between the home, the school, and the community.

The Case for Innote Interest

The fourth broad concept in progressive education was the belief that *intrinsic motivation* is essential to good learning—in other words, that an activity should have within itself the kind of purpose and satisfaction that will lead the pupil to engage in it. A child should learn to spell in order to write things he wants to write, not to get a better grade than the other fellow. A child should write essays and poems because he has something to say, not to meet an assignment.

The concept cut deep into traditional practice. Grading, report cards, prizes, and many other motivating devices were seriously questioned. Instead attention was focused on each child's progress in relation to his own ability.

I need not tell you how strong a reaction these ideas provoked. In the first place, said the critics, competition is a normal part of life; the school had better prepare pupils to meet it. And second, they said, learning is a pretty trying process even at best.

Sometimes it can be achieved only through grades, promotion, and threat of punishment—especially with the immature.

Clearly the best educational experiences are motivated from within. We gain more from reading a book if we do it because we enjoy it than if we do it to meet a course requirement. We are more likely to remember the solution of a problem if we really need to solve it for our own benefit, not memorize it for an examination. Thus intrinsic motivation is a worthy ideal; yet even the most gifted teacher can attain it only imperfectly. If all other kinds of motivation were eliminated from schools and colleges, there would be a tremendous decrease in students' work, and many teachers would be in serious difficulty. We find it necessary, then, to accept imperfection, but we shall teach better if we strive for the best.

Many of the values sought by progressive education are highly desirable. In my judgment they reflect deep-running currents within the liberal democratic tradition of our country. But why should a movement with so much good in it be so discredited? Possibly one reason is that progressive education came to be identified, to some extent, with certain extreme and ill-founded practices. Also it may be that it has failed to observe adequately one of its own tenets: the need for continuously revising theory and practice in the light of new evidence. It seems to me, for example, that new evidence on children's need for security has not received enough attention.

Perhaps too the organized progressive education movement has served its day of usefulness. Even if this were true, however, it seems unfortunate that there has not been some logical outgrowth—some way of building on the experience gained, some way of moving on to a new educational frontier. For if education is to stay alive, it must have a frontier. In the 1920's and the 1930's progressive education contributed greatly to this need. It served as a constant stimulus to the discussion of educational issues and the testing of new practices.

Today there is no comparable frontier in education, and we are the poorer for it. We need continuous challenge, bold thinking, critical study, pointed discussion. We need to try out new ideas. Progressive education supplied these for us in the 1920's and 1930's. What will serve the same role in the 1950's and 1960's? At the moment the answer to this question appears uncertain, and herein lies one of the greatest challenges facing all of us who work in education today.

This article is taken from an address, Values in Progressive Education That Must Be Preserved, given by President Caswell at the tenth annual conference of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, last March in Chicago.

Excerpts from a new book



THE WHITE GATE

*Adventures in the Imagination of a Child**

Mary Ellen Chase

Author of "The Bible and the Common Reader," "Recipe for a Magic Childhood," and "A Goodly Heritage"

MANY YEARS ago, when I was a child in Maine, our large and rambling white house was surrounded by a long white picket fence, which enclosed our apple orchard on one side and, on the other, set us apart from the field and apple orchard of our next-door neighbor. At the entrance to our driveway the fence was broken by a white gate, which swung inward or outward as necessary to allow for our comings-in or goings-out. The pickets of this gate were nailed firmly to sturdy cross-timbers, the lower one wide enough for us children to stand on, the upper one just high enough for our elbows or our fingers, depending on our ages.

The most clear and lasting impressions of my childhood are related to this gate, which both sheltered and extended the small, tight world in which we lived. Behind it, our driveway moved past our house and toward the barn, also large and white, filled with the smells of hay and of kindly animals in their stalls and with the sound of pigeons, which swept in blue and white flocks to and from their dovecote high in the loft. Before it lay the country road, which ran downhill toward the village and the sea and uphill toward the sky. Dusty in the summer, muddy in the spring rains, cut into frozen ruts in the late autumn, and buried beneath snow in the winter, this road was, to me as a child standing on the white gate, next to the weather the most thrilling thing I knew.

If I looked behind me, there was the sureness of my home, a safety which lay warm and comfortable somewhere deep inside my pinafore. There was my bed with its bright patchwork quilts; there were my first books, my doll, my mother and father, my amusing grandmother, the warm kitchen with its black cookstove, the fire in the library, mugs of milk, and lamplight against the shadowy corners of our big rooms. But if I stared before me, beyond the pickets of the white gate, what excitement might not be coming or going along that road between the sky and the sea?

*This book was published in 1954 by W. W. Norton; the excerpts are printed by permission. The illustrations by Nora S. Unwin are also reprinted from the book.

BEYOND THE GATE

Tim Finn, the blind man, might suddenly cut the bright space between the hilltop and the sky and come down the road, tap-tap-tapping with his stick. He was coming for his mail, which someone else must read for him, and for his food at the store, which somehow, my mother said, he could cook himself.

"Be polite to him," my father said. "Were it not for the Grace of God, you might be blind yourselves."

But in spite of the Grace of God, which we did not at all understand, we were frightened of Tim Finn, especially of the black patch which he wore over his eyes and which made my brother Edward think darkly of pirates.

Tim Finn usually tapped his way past us as we perched on the gate, red-cheeked and breathless from fear; but on one awful morning he stopped in front of us all. He said:

"Do I, or do I not, smell the four Chase children on that gate?"

My sister Mildred, who was eleven when I was nine, was the only one of us who behaved well under these terrifying circumstances. She remained on the gate while my sister Edith, who was eight, and Edward, who was five, and I ran for the orchard and began to clamber each into an apple tree.

"Good morning, Mr. Tim Finn," she said politely, though her voice was small and weak. "Can we do anything for you?"

"No, my dear," said Tim Finn, beginning to tap the road again with his stick, "though I thank you kindly. There's nothing anyone can do for me but to pray that some day I'll see Our Lord face to face, for once He made the blind to see."

But Tim Finn was by no means the only source of excitement on our country road. Peddlers might and, indeed, did come down the hill once the road was dried of spring mud—dark women in queer, bright clothes with gold rings in their ears, who carried on their hips great oilcloth bags stuffed with household wares, trinkets, laces, shawls, and odd toys. These women came from far-off

countries, Syria or Armenia, my father said, and we must always be kind to them as they were *footsore and weary and strangers in a strange land*.

In early summer when school was over, the organ-grinder came either down the hill or up from the village. His name was Lorenzo. He ground out quick and merry tunes from his faded green organ, which he carried strapped around his shoulders, and introduced us quite formally each year to his monkey, Jock, who wore a green suit and a red hat with a green feather and shook hands with us all. My mother invited Lorenzo to come through the gate into the driveway, whereupon all the neighborhood children came running in from the board sidewalk outside our fence to dance in squealing circles through our orchard grass. When we presented our pennies to Jock, placing them in his small yellow hand, he took off his hat with a sweeping gesture and jumped to his master's shoulder.

My mother gave Lorenzo a cup of coffee or a glass of lemonade before they went away; and Lorenzo never failed to remove his tattered straw hat and say, "Thank you, good madam." Then with a strong shrug of his left shoulder, which moved the heavy organ-strap nearer to his neck, he would set forth on his way, with Jock on his right shoulder and a crowd of us following, for his yearly coming was a mighty event in our lives.

SOMETIMES, but rarely, a cloud of dust at the top of the hill, with a clatter of swaying pots and pans, announced the dreaded but delightful advent of gypsies. Down the hill their wagon rumbled, driven by a dark, evil-looking man with a black pipe in his mouth and drawn by tired, shaggy horses with faded red tassels above their ears.

The terror which shook us all was wonderful as we saw from the window the iron pots swinging from beneath the wagon and watched the children performing rude antics in the road beside it. Once the wagon halted and a small, slight gypsy woman in a long red dress and a red scarf over her head swung open the gate and came sidling up our driveway to the door. She was shaking a drum-like object surrounded by tiny bells, and she moved her feet gracefully in worn red carpet slippers as though in tune with the bells.

"Keep back!" my mother said to us in a hoarse whisper.

"Go away!" she cried to the gypsy woman.

The woman tossed her head then and laughed, showing even, white teeth against her dark face. And somehow her ringing, careless laughter made my mother seem the loser in an odd battle between what was respectable and clean and safe and what was free and wild and exciting.

"Your fortune, lady," the gypsy said in a high, whining voice, "for only a dime, dear lady. And don't be afraid, dear little ones. I've children of my own."

We stood transfixed at the open window, peering around my mother until the gypsy had laughed again and shaken her bells high in the air before she turned and danced down our driveway toward the waiting wagon and her filthy children by our white gate. Then they all laughed and screamed together, and the wagon creaked and clattered away down the road.

Secretly we adored the coming of the gypsies. We loved the thought of their fire at night with the children sprawling about it and some stew cooking in one of their iron pots. I loved, too, the odd knowledge, proffered by my father, that they wandered because they could not help it, because the necessity for wandering was placed inside them all when they were born and had lain inside them for centuries, *from generation to generation*.

I used to ask myself in what far countries I would wander if only I had been made that way, and settled on several—Spain, and Italy, and California, and the Land of the Midnight Sun. And as I wandered, I wore a red dress, danced about with utmost grace, and swung a drum with tiny silver bells high into the air.

Indians often came down or up our road, usually singly and always on foot. These were mostly men, with small, long black eyes and high cheekbones; and since they were slung about with baskets and with long strands of withes, reeds, and grasses, sometimes plain but more often colored, they, too, lent brightness as well as excitement. My father insisted that they be made welcome because, he said, their race had been treated unjustly by our forefathers and we must make up for such injustice.

I would not give the impression that only foreigners, or *outlanders*, as our alien wayfarers were locally termed, lent drama to our road and to us children watching from the white gate. Even in the ordinary and customary travelers on the road there was always interest for us. The scissors-grinder came two or three times a year, ringing his bell and calling out: "Bring out your knives and your scissors"; the meat peddler in his white-covered cart made his weekly round of calls. And always there was the passing up and down of our neighbors and our friends, bound for their mail or their groceries and stopping for some welcome words with us. There were laden hayracks drawn by slow, stumbling oxen; blue dumpcarts filled with manure for village gardens; and, in winter, sledges piled high with blocks of ice which, catching the sunlight, held quivering rainbows inside their pale blue transparency.

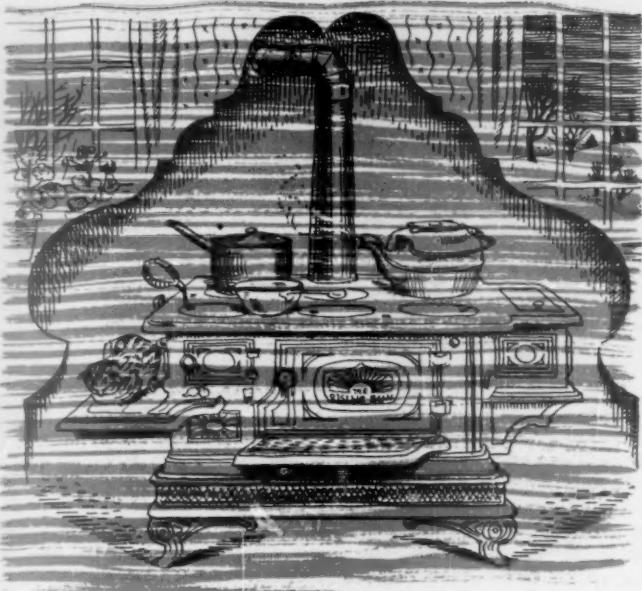
Even if there was nothing except the empty road itself, it never seemed empty to me. If I looked across it from the gate, there was a wide field with the wind tossing the grass, and beyond the field, tall trees and the white steeple of the church with its gilded weathercock. If I looked downward, there was the distant blue of the harbor water. If I looked upward, there was the top of the hill with the sky above and nothing beyond, at least nothing which I could see. I knew, of course, precisely what lay beyond, but I loved to pretend that I knew nothing at all—that the line of the horizon and the great half-circle of the sky above held only mysteries quite unknown to me, waiting to be discovered in some strange time which people called the future.

WITHIN THE GATE

At the time when the white gate meant most to me, I was between nine and twelve years old, and those years lay between 1896 and the turn of the century. In those years on the coast of Maine there were no automobiles, almost no telephones, no gasoline engines, no electric lights, almost no bathrooms, or furnaces, or refrigerators, no running water, no paper towels, no egg beaters, no soap flakes. In place of these amenities there were hard work in which all had a share, the comfortable knowledge of what one's days would be like, a sense of security impossible today, and plenty of time.

There was also the constant excitement of the weather. As today the lives of children are governed by school buses or car pools, the radio, records, comics, and movies, piano lessons and dancing school and mechanical toys, so our lives were almost completely governed by what the skies saw fit to bestow upon us.

Its tyranny over us was most evident, of course, in the winter; but in the year 1896 and for many years following, Maine winters claimed more than half the number of the months. Late September and all of October meant sharp frosts and early lamplight; November, high, biting



winds and the first drifting snowflakes. From December until April, except for an occasional and brief January thaw, we were buried in snow. The mercury dropped to zero and below and remained there for days; the ice sealed our bay for seven miles out to sea and cracked with the sound of guns as the tide crept in and out beneath it; the air was cut by the blue, wavering breaths of muffled, venturesome people; children undressed by kitchen stoves or roaring fireplaces and, clasping hot flat-irons or soapstones wrapped in cloths or in newspapers, dashed upstairs to huddle between blankets and under patchwork quilts in frigid rooms with tightly closed windows.

When we went to school on bitter days (though in deference to the weather there was no primary or grammar school in January and February), bundled up in knitted hoods and heavy reefers, woolen mufflers and long black leggings, we carried hot baked potatoes in our mittened hands and kept these warm on the top of the schoolhouse stove against our return home.

The white gate is never absent in my mind from the weather and especially from that of winter. There were few hours then when we could stand upon it, and often, after a heavy storm, it remained open for days, swung back upon its hinges and buried in snow except for the points of its pickets.

My father, cutting the drifts of our driveway into great cubes with his shovel and hurling them right and left, was so worsted by the time he reached the gate that he welcomed an open space there through which he could more easily reach the road. But when there was less snow than usual or during a January thaw, he would close it again to limber up the hinges, he said, and keep it from warping too badly. On clear, bright mornings when it was closed, its pickets cast long blue shadows across the snowy road, making another gate there; and in the late afternoon as the sun went down, more shadows, now cold and gray, made yet another gate, this one extending inward toward our house.

The only day during the remainder of the year which held more fascination for us than any in the winter was

the day in the spring which marked the shedding of our heavy underwear. No butterfly or moth swathed in a tight cocoon could have felt more exhilaration in bursting its bonds for its brief life in the sun and wind than we felt when, after hours of careful consideration, my mother decreed that our red-flannel combinations might at last give way to Ferris waists and cotton drawers.

It is impossible through mere words to do justice to this yearly ceremony. The rite was performed around noon time, for my mother waited cautiously to be sure the early warmth was not deceptive; but once she had decided that the hour had come, we tore upstairs and began to free ourselves while she divested Edward in the kitchen. The Ferris waists held buttons on tapes which met the buttonholes on the waistbands of our drawers, and we were so impatient for our imminent release that we found irritating the search for the exact meeting places of holes and buttons. But once we had managed the matching of these, the cool touch of cotton against our itching, sweating chests and legs, the intoxication of bare shoulders and arms to be covered only by a light frock, became the very essence of liberty itself, only to be increased when once the wind and the sun had had their chance at us. My mother hung our red flannels and our woolen petticoats on the clothesline while we tore about the orchard and finally came to rest on the lower timber of the gate. For there we could feel the wind circulating through our cotton drawers and the warm sun getting beneath our percale, gingham, or calico.

When I was nine and first began to be aware of the security and the excitement of winter within our gate, our family consisted of my parents, my two sisters, my brother and me, my grandmother, who lived with us at least six months of every year, and our hired girl.

I suppose that we four children were very strictly brought up, at least in comparison with the rearing of most children today. We always addressed our father as *Sir*, never daring to answer his questions merely by *Yes* and *No*; and in like manner we said *Yes, Ma'am* and *No, Ma'am* to my mother and grandmother. Immediate obedience was the law of the household, arguments being not only discouraged but forbidden. We were early taught to listen to the conversation of our elders, into which we entered only when invited; but since invitations were frequently given, we did not by any means subsist in silence.

We were taught also to amuse ourselves and never allowed to "tease" either for attention or for entertainment. We were punished for disobedience, for rudeness, for marked neglect of our assigned chores, and for lying (at which exercise I especially showed early genius!), sometimes by being deprived of a coveted object or pleasure, sometimes, if the offense was particularly grievous, by a sound spanking.

On the positive side of this perhaps relentless discipline, we were constantly reminded both by precept and example that the even running of our household depended upon the thoughtfulness of each for the other, that selfishness was not only wrong but unlovely, and that the respect and affection of our neighbors might be forfeited through the misbehavior of any one of us. Nor was generous praise ever withheld from us when we deserved it.

As I look back upon the four of us during those far-off days, we always seem a kind of corporate mass, since we were together referred to as *the children* and rarely, unless one of us was ill or injured, singled out for individual treatment or consideration. This impression, I suppose, lies in the fact that when we were directly under our

rooftree, we behaved, with some daring variations, in much the same way, since that way was prescribed for us. We were, however, vastly dissimilar products and doubtless caused our parents hours of anxious discussion.

My sister Mildred at eleven was a quiet, tidy, capable child, who could usually be depended upon to do what she was supposed to do. She was almost never punished, for she rarely got into trouble. She was diligent in school and excelled in sums, which talent delighted my father. She was often held up as an example to Edith and me, and she richly deserved that honor, for she did everything with far more skill and care than did we.

EDITH AT eight was the brightest of us all by every standard, and she was also by far the prettiest, with round, shining gray eyes and quick, graceful ways. She had an avid memory and could recite long poems, the *Psalm of Life*, the *Burial of Moses*, and many lines of *Hiawatha*, without a slip. She was merry and exuberant, adroit at making up games, and quite marvelous at mimicry. She and I should have shared equally in punishment; but she could assume a round-eyed innocence which had also a plaintive, even pathetic quality about it, most helpful in defeating justice.

Both my sisters disapproved of me at nine, and, indeed, during all of my childhood. They said that I shirked my chores, was forever escaping to the toilet to read, made up untrue stories, and, except when I was under the scrutiny of my parents, "put on" in a disgraceful manner both in words and ways in order to draw attention to myself. All these accusations, as I knew even then, were entirely just.

If my brother Edward at five possessed any distinct personality, it has been smothered in my memory. Since he was then the only son and had been waited for over-long, he was my father's idol and was early destined in my father's dreams for Bowdoin College and, without doubt, for a Republican Presidency. I look back upon him mostly as a nuisance, in white frilled blouses and tight knee pants or kilts, whom we had to drag about when we played out-of-doors and tolerate within.

There were, of course, many days even in our winters when we were turned loose in the snowy fields where the pale blue sparkling crust would bear our weight and where we coasted down the slopes for hours with a wonderful sense of freedom. When the road outside the gate had been broken after a storm and pounded smooth by sledges and sleighs, we coasted down our long hill, going "belly-bump" on our sleds, a quarter-mile slide nearly to the village. We were often lucky enough at the foot of the hill, with only a brief wait, to get a ride back to the top on the empty sledge of some obliging farmer who had carried logs to the mill or ice to the town ice-house.

BUT for the most part winter, especially to young children, meant indoors and warm, fragrant kitchens. Our kitchen was large and sunny with red geraniums in the windows and a wide view of fields and hills. Jutting from its south wall was our huge black wood stove, known by its name in raised iron letters across its oven door as *The Rising Sun*; and my mother kept it shining with a polish called by the same name. Between the eastern windows stood our kitchen table with a red-and-white checked cloth to match the geraniums, and by one of the windows was a Boston rocker, also painted red and flanked by four small red stools, which were pushed under the table when not in use. Our black iron kitchen sink separated the two western windows and held on its right shelf a green pump, which, when it wheezed and refused

to work, had to be "caught" by a dipper of water drawn from the pail on the shelf to the left.

Against the north wall of our kitchen, opposite the stove and affording a view from both eastern and western windows, was the piece of furniture which most intimately concerned us children. This was what we called the *secretary*. It was, in reality, a high and heavy chest of six drawers with two wide shelves above them. The upper shelf had on either side a stout, carved post; the lower, below two smaller drawers, was just the right distance from the upper to serve as a perfect footrest for small feet.

MY mother early saw in this old secretary an indispensable ally. Even in a kitchen as large as ours four pairs of feet about the floor could be not only an intolerable nuisance, but a possible source of perils to her and to us; and, while we were still very young, she had solved this problem by elevating us all to the top shelf of the secretary. A roller towel carefully placed below the armpits of the two children on the right and then around the convenient post, a similar securing of the two on the left, and we were proof against any cold drafts across our yellow painted floor, against kettles of hot fat, and, best of all, against the possible boredom of any number of January snowstorms.

We four spent innumerable winter mornings on the top of that old secretary. I can still smell the warm, spicy smells of gingersnaps baking in the oven, of apple pies rich with cinnamon, and of countless doughnuts merrily bobbing about on the surface of boiling lard. My mother sang hymns as she went about her work and encouraged us to sing with her. One of her favorites was *Shall We Gather at the River?* and all of us, joining in the chorus, loved to assure her that we most certainly would be there. When the old clock in our dining room slowly struck eleven, my mother reached up to each of us a fresh cooky and a cup of milk; and for this midmorning treat we laid aside our spool knitting-machines or the books we were reading.

It is always with books that the old secretary associates itself in my mind, for we read for hours there, sometimes the older of us aloud to the younger, sometimes, after we had all learned the magic of words, by ourselves. And we learned this magic early, not waiting to be taught at school. Without doubt, since we possessed a father who when at home was almost never without a book in his hand and a mother who somehow found time to read as well as to darn and cook, fashion clothes and refashion them, clean and wash and iron, we had absorbed the wholesome truth that books held manifold riches which we must discover for ourselves.

THERE we would sit for hours upon our lofty perch while the snow fell or bitter winds blew across the white fields, not actually upon the secretary at all, but instead in Arabia with Aladdin or in the dark forest with Hansel and Gretel, with the four ingenious Robinsons on their mysterious island or with Oliver Twist in the workhouse, with David Copperfield on the Peggottys' houseboat, loving the alluring smell of crabs and lobsters and the nose-gay of seaweed in the blue mug, or with Jim Hawkins crouching in the apple barrel of the *Hispaniola*.

My mother usually managed just after eleven to sit down for half an hour in the red rocking chair by the window. She called this half hour her *respite*, a word which early charmed me; and on days when no drafts were blowing across the floor (for even the *Rising Sun* was not always victorious over the worst of Maine weather), she would help us down from our Parnassus and allow us to sit upon our red stools while she herself read

aloud to us. Here was the doorsill to complete enchantment, for she was seemingly as lost as we in whatever she was reading. The iron teakettle simmered on the Rising Sun; the red geraniums glowed with life; smells of our approaching dinner filled our noses, while my mother's voice brought trooping into our kitchen all those whom we admired or feared, loved or hated. Nor did she bring them among us only by her voice. She became as distressed as we over their misfortunes, as angry as we over their misdeeds. "Isn't he a wicked man?" she would cry when Fagin terrified Oliver in the loathsome garret.

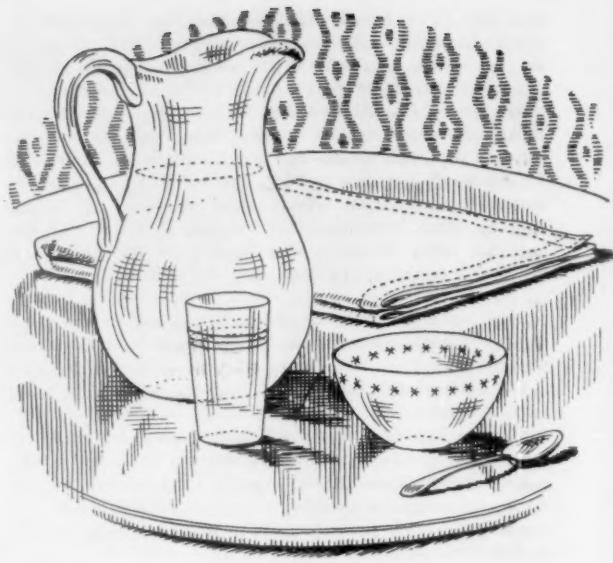
Those long winter days within our gate, when the drifting, silent snow dimmed our orchard and our field, or the cold without was sharp and frightening, or the early darkness crept over us, have never lived apart from books in my memory. Tied to the top of the secretary, lying by the open fire before our early bedtime, huddled into a ball under the square piano, dropping a hated dustcloth to draw Pip or Little Nell from the shelf, I laughed and cried; was lonely and even lovely; sat by gypsy fires; was born in a workhouse; met a convict by a grave in a dark, flat wilderness; died a dozen tragic and lamented deaths, my heart "mute and motionless forever." "When I die," I whispered to myself, "put me near something that has loved the light, and had the sky above it always."

THE DOCTOR'S SAUCER

Among the dishes in our china cupboard when I was a child was a glass saucedish, which, since it was the only one of its kind and too small for pickles or preserves in a family so large as ours, was seldom used at meals. We were very fond of it, however. It was of an enticing shape, round and deep, and had encircling its rim a line of tiny stars cut into the glass. Perhaps because of its importance to us, it was early set apart by my mother as *the doctor's saucer*, although in reality it was not a saucer at all, or even strictly a saucedish. I always see it holding some flat pink pills, shaped like small lozenges, which the doctor invariably left upon those rare and momentous occasions when he called professionally upon us. I do not think I ever wondered what healing properties these pills contained or why they were always the same in size and color whatever the nature of the illness. The saucedish with its awesome contents was, instead, a symbol to me of that intense excitement which literally galvanized our entire household before, during, and immediately after the doctor's visit.

The one occasion when the doctor came as a matter of course, without preliminary and anxious discussion on the part of our parents as to the wisdom of summoning outside counsel to our aid, was the arrival of a new baby. Since this event, however, was always marked by our absence, we older children being given over to the care of relatives or friends for the necessary time involved, we were not aware of what went on at home. We were simply taken under some hospitable roofree for a day or a night and, after all was safely over, brought back home to see our new brother or sister.

To summon the doctor in the ordinary course of human events was, however, quite another matter, so infrequent and so startling that his saucer with its pink pills has remained in my imagination as a sacred symbol not only of the solemn upheaval of our household, but of our importance as a family. Such calls were never decided upon lightly in any country family at the turn of the century. They meant not only expense, but the reluctant admission of mothers that they were not competent to deal single-handed with the illness in question. They meant also an anxious flurry of the entire community; for the



news that any family *had had the doctor* was bound to travel rapidly and widely, to cause general alarm and concern, and to be commonly interpreted not as a precautionary measure but as a last resort.

My mother's talents in dealing with illness were exceptional even in a day when most mothers of large families were supposed to be well versed in the diagnosis of common disorders and in the knowledge of country remedies. She could gauge a fever; identify most rashes; treat burns, cuts, bruises, sprains, and boils; tie up a sore throat in a stocking still warm from a child's foot; cure earache by the insertion in the ear of a hot raisin. She was familiar with all ailments of the stomach, and would cheerfully decide whether hot ginger tea, essence of peppermint, or an emetic was the wisest means of cure. She kept on the top shelf of a small wall cupboard in her bedroom a square black case of homeopathic remedies, little glass phials of tiny white pills labeled *aconite*, *belladonna*, *nux vomica*, and other less familiar names; and when any one of us seemed feverish or "out of sorts" in any other way, she would administer a few of these pills at nightfall and wait in quiet confidence for the morrow. Therefore, whenever an indisposition lingered overlong and we heard her say to my father, "If that child is not really better in the morning, I think we must seriously consider calling in the doctor," we knew that matters were grave indeed.

On such rare nights I went to bed not only tense from excitement, but, I am afraid, besieged by the guilty hope that the morning would bring added consternation instead of relief. Even the stricken, in all his or her discomfort, was not entirely proof against such dreams and desires, for to be able to relate at school that one had been so ill as to be under the doctor's care for even a single visit denoted signal achievement and triumph.

We had two doctors in our village. The one whom we employed, not only to bring us a baby but whenever more usual matters came to a crisis, lived next door to us. He was a tall, rather quiet man, who had a passion for local history and plenty of time to indulge it. He loved to potter around his vegetable garden and to saw and split wood, a generous supply of which he kept in his yard. One of the front rooms of his large white house served as

his office, a rather untidy room cluttered by stuffed birds, books, and papers. Here he received patients who were able to consult him at home and saved fifty cents or a dollar by so doing, since his own visits afield were priced from one to two dollars each, depending on the distance.

When the decision to call the doctor had been irrevocably made and the hour of his approach drew nigh, a vast and awful solemnity descended upon our household. We children who were well except for extreme tension watched from the dining-room windows, all of us washed, combed, and in clean raiment. The patient, if it was summer, was lying in our four-poster in the spare room upstairs, clean, expectant, and important; if it was winter, he or she was in our small downstairs bedroom or on a cot in the living-room beyond the library. In either case the bed was immaculate with fresh linen, and my mother, for once hovering about nervously, was immaculate also in a starched white apron.

No one spoke. The slow, heavy ticking of the dining-room clock was the only sound. All eyes were on the doctor's house awaiting the moment when he should emerge therefrom with my father, who had gone to fetch him, walk up the sidewalk, and turn in through our white gate. On our dining-room table, arranged in ceremonial order, were a large white napkin, a pitcher of water with a tumbler beside it, a silver spoon, and the doctor's glass saucer. The kitchen was ready also, the kettle boiling on the stove, the sink clean, fresh towels on its shelf together with a flowered washbowl from one of our bedroom sets.

When the doctor preceded my father into our hallway between kitchen and dining-room, he paid little attention to us children. Once he had given his hat into the hands of my father or of Annie, he stood for a few minutes, whatever the season, holding his hands over the hot kitchen stove, preparatory, we assumed, to examining his patient. I do not recall that he washed them before his entrance into the sickroom, even although all had been made ready for him at the kitchen sink. Then he followed my parents into the library for a preconsultation behind a door closed to us, who still stood hushed and silent in the dining-room and who remained in that unusual state until his return. What went on by the bedside was withheld from us, nor do I think we were much interested in it. It was the extraordinary presence of the doctor within our midst which rendered us inarticulate and entranced.

When, after another muted conversation in the library, the doctor returned to the dining-room, followed by my mother and father, he became more aware of our presence, even to the extent of depressing our tongues with the silver spoon and looking at the throat of each of us.

At last the climaxing moment came. The doctor opened his big black satchel on the dining-room table, spreading its two parts flat, and, after a few moments' deliberation, chose from its glass bottles the medicines he had decided upon. While he did this, he gave my mother explicit directions for their use, which she wrote down carefully with a pencil on a pad of paper. I always waited anxiously for the pink pills, fearing lest among the tiny packets of powders or the red or brown or green liquids, which he poured into little bottles from larger ones, they might be overlooked; but I do not remember that they ever were. He kept a rather large pasteboard box of them under a strap in the middle of one side of his satchel; and the moment when he drew out this box and allowed a dozen or more of them to fall into the glass saucedish was to me the crowning point of his visit and the crest of our distinction as a family.

We remained subdued in voice and manner for quite

some time after the doctor had gone through our gate and on toward his own house. We could not descend easily or quickly into our everyday ways. We were not too interested, I fear, in the fate of the patient, who during that hour had seemed but a means to an end, the comparatively unexciting cause of a stupendous effect. I remember that I secretly hoped to be sent upon some errand to the village so that I might answer seriously all the many questions which would be asked me, repeating solemnly my mother's remark to us that *all was as well as it could be under the circumstances*. Such errands did sometimes materialize and always were extremely welcome. But if they did not, there were the concrete evidences of the doctor's visit on the white mantelpiece in our dining-room. My mother always placed them there, the glass saucedish conspicuously in the center.

WORDS

I am not certain of the time of my discovery of words, their form, sound, and charm; but I think I was well on the way to it by my tenth year. I can, however, clearly trace certain earlier activities and experiences which must have been milestones along the way toward my exciting destination. The first of these activities took place at our dining-room table on many rainy or snowy afternoons and owed its being solely to my mother's powers of invention.

I was not yet of school age when I, together with my two sisters, spent hours at my mother's game of *playing authors*; but I knew my letters, having learned them very early, as children then did, from blocks and from those alphabetical books of glazed canvas familiar to our time. My mother's invention had nothing to do with the real game of *Authors* which we were to play later, sitting with cards in our hands and asking one another "Have you *Martin Chuzzlewit*?" Hers was yet another means of keeping us occupied and quiet, and it worked admirably. It involved a five-cent copybook for each of us, a pencil, and some book with clear type which we were to pretend to write by printing its words in awkward capitals on the clean paper of our copybooks. I was around five years old when I was encouraged to pretend that I was Charles Dickens writing *Great Expectations*. I do not recall that



I proceeded very far with my impersonation of Dickens; but I do distinctly remember that I was terrified when I recognized for myself that my sprawling letters spelled: DON'T CUT MY THROAT, SIR.

My mother's talents for thinking up pastimes bore fruit when at six years old I entered the village school, for by that time I could read quite fluently. Indeed, my first day at school marked one of the few triumphs of my entire life, and every detail of that triumph is etched sharply on my memory.

OUR village schoolhouse consisted of two rooms, which held respectively the lower and the upper school. On the September morning when I began my formal education I went, of course, with all the younger children into the lower room with my new slate and my new pencil box and with that vast excitement which rescues, in most minds, at least one day in childhood from oblivion. My triumph began when my teacher discovered that I could read, and thereupon wrote a note to the teacher upstairs which suggested that I take my reading lesson with the older children.

I myself bore the note. I still remember every frightened lift of my feet, every throb of my heart, as I went up the dusty winding staircase to that upper room, knocked at the door, walked down the aisle in my blue gingham pinafore, and gave the note to the teacher of the upper school. She received me kindly and placed me, consumed by pride and shyness, at the end of a long settee, which was soon filled with ten-year-old scholars about to begin a Fifth Reader, compiled by a certain Mr. T. W. Harvey. Together with much dross his Reader contained much gold, and I memorized all manner of each, from the *Burial of Moses* and *Somebody's Darling* to *Selections from Shakespeare*. I think it was the swing of the lines, the rhythm, and the drama which appealed to me rather than any magic latent in single words.

I am convinced that the preoccupation with spelling, common to every country school in those years, was a potent influence, however unconscious we were of it at the time, in giving children a sense of words as something more than the correct placing of letters. To fail in spelling was literally a disgrace both in school and at home, and my mother guarded against this humiliation by drilling us in our daily lists of words each morning before we set forth for school. Her very way of pronouncing these as though she cared for them made an impression on me years before they became my own.

I early treasured two words which my aunt Cad was responsible for lodging in my mind. One of these was *monotonous* and the other *weird*. Aunt Cad said that the reiterative sound of the sawmill throughout one entire morning became *monotonous* to her and that a certain misty twilight with a rising moon seemed very *weird*. I asked her what these words meant, and once she had explained them, I made them my own and used each with great pride and no little affection.

SHORTLY after my twelfth birthday I began my collection of words. With ten cents of the new half dollar which my grandmother had given me as a birthday gift, I purchased a small copybook, bound in red boards and filled with blue-lined white pages. Relieved that I had been able to buy it unattended and unnoted by any member of my family, I took it to the barn loft and seriously considered the surest way of keeping my secret to myself.

My fears of discovery and of mocking disclosure had sound basis. In our house, large as it was, there were few places where one could hide cherished personal treasures with any measure of confidence. Single rooms for the

children of large families were virtually unknown, for even if there were unoccupied rooms, few parents of the time saw good and sufficient reason for such use of them. Moreover, any ethical or even humane standards were then, as always, sadly lacking in the normal attitude of one child toward the inner life of another. I remembered uncomfortably, as I sat in the hayloft with my new red book, how I had not long before shamelessly read my sister Edith's diary, which she hopefully concealed under her pillow of our common bed. I finally decided that the only relatively safe place for my book and for its contents, which might well bring forth jeering comments and even revelations at a time when I was becoming peculiarly sensitive to them, was in the loft itself; and I at once began to search for some hole or cranny in which I might secrete it. With the help of a small ladder I found such a hiding-place in a high corner of the loft. Here there was a slit between the barn wall and the joist which supported the roof, and this slit entirely concealed my book.

I decided to begin my Word Book by lists or categories of my newly discovered treasures. My first category I called *Sad Words* and placed within it *if, alone, stranger, solitary, desolate, and forgotten*. Later I added *shadowy and twilight*. My section entitled *Glad Words* began with *radiant*, and that on *Frightening Words* with *darkness and death*. One memorable rainy afternoon I suddenly perceived that words with long 'i's in them were filled with light and thereupon wrote down a list of them, beginning with *light* itself.

Whenever I could escape without comment or undue curiosity on the part of the family, which was beginning to distress me in many mysterious ways, I climbed to the hayloft and, taking my book from its dusty, chaff-filled hole, either added to its riches or allowed my imagination to conjure up hundreds of kaleidoscopic images suggested by them. The red book was never discovered, and my frequent annoying preoccupation with its contents, outside the hayloft, was doubtless diagnosed and borne with by my parents as merely another painful symptom found in all children on the threshold of adolescence.

A ROOM OF MY OWN

Among the many evidences of understanding shown by modern young parents in bringing up their children, none is more wise than the allotment to a child, whenever possible, of a room of his own. True, there are fewer children to the average family than there were sixty years ago; and yet, equally true, there is less space in the average home than in the big houses common to my childhood.

I never visit homes of young people today in which each child has his own room, however small, his own four walls within which he may keep his own possessions and treasures, bear his own humiliations and punishments, dream his own dreams, that I do not recall the rooms assigned to most children at the turn of the present century. It was simply taken for granted in those days that children should be bunched together. At five I was placed with one sister, and later on with both of them, in one large room, and any idea that I, or they, did not necessarily like such an arrangement would never have entered the really considerate minds of my parents.

From nine years old until twelve I longed for a room of my own, but it never once occurred to me that there was the slightest chance of my having one. I secretly hated sharing a room with my sister, or sisters. To share a bed with someone was not conducive either to intimate endearments toward one's doll when one was very young, or to nurturing dreams and fancies when one was older.



And if a child perchance loved to make up stories and whisper them half aloud, no place could be less congenial to such an exciting pastime than half a double bed.

In my tenth year the hour of my ultimate salvation began to dawn for me. My father determined to do away with our necessarily untidy woodshed, which lay between the kitchen and the entrance to the barn, and convert the space into another downstairs bedroom. This, my father said, could serve my mother as a sewing-room or might ultimately, *when times were better*, house a man who should tend the horses and milk the cow. We called this hypothetical stranger a *coachman* to our awed playmates; but he never evolved.

The room, however, did evolve, complete with a discarded bureau, a washstand, a small table, and a cot bed. My mother rarely used it for her sewing; and the cold, rather cheerless little room remained unoccupied for fully two years. Then, one late September night, I was suddenly struck by the desperate resolution to ask my father if I might not have it as my own. Even the idea was so revolutionary and unheard-of that I did not dare reflect upon it or postpone its utterance. That very evening when my parents were by some happy chance reading by themselves in the library, I summoned up more courage than I had ever known I possessed, stood before them, and asked for a room of my own.

That they were stunned by my request is an understatement. My mother in particular was overcome, not alone by my question, I feel sure, but also by her genuine concern as to what might conceivably be wrong with me. That a presumably normal and in no way unusual child of hers should of her own free will desire not only a room by herself, but one far away from the companionship and security of the family, was to her both incredible and alarming, and she at once asked me if I had completely lost my senses. My father, who was always more flexible toward innovations of all sorts than was my mother, was more amused than shocked, once he had recovered from his initial surprise. He pointed out carefully in my interest the things which were clearly against such an upheaval of our sleeping quarters, emphasizing es-

pecially the isolation of the room and my probable nervousness in being so far away at night; but once I had told him that I had considered these drawbacks (which alas! I had not fully done) and still wanted the room, he looked at me quizzically, yet in a kindly way, said he saw no real reason against it, and returned to his book. After I had thanked him and turned to go, I noticed that my mother had placed her own book on the table and was gazing anxiously from him to me.

The very next day I moved my few possessions into my room. As I did so, the misgivings which had been steadily creeping over me and which were not diminished in power by the dire prophecies of my amazed sisters were stronger within me than was my exultation. Never a courageous child, I was in reality beset by fears. The sudden reminder, as I decided where I would place my bed, which now looked small and cold, that I would some night be awakened by a strange dream became an almost unbearable certainty.

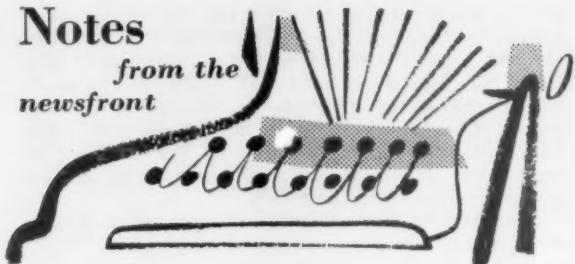
More tangible terrors also assailed me. The back window of my room looked out upon thick lilac bushes surrounding our new woodshed; its side window, upon the open fields. Both were low, downstairs windows through which anyone of a marauding nature might peer or even step. The distance between my room and even the kitchen now seemed immeasurable. Although I worked feverishly at setting my things to rights in the hope that activity would quiet my dread, I was tempted by late afternoon to admit my terror and to return, chastened and grateful, to the security of confusion and a double bed. At that eleventh hour, I am sure that pride rather than my desire for privacy (which now seemed feeble and long since past) was all that held me to my decision. Terrifying as were my fears, which were now undermining my resolve and darkening my wish for freedom, even they were more tolerable than confessing them to my father.

HE HIMSELF restored in some small measure the courage I so desperately wanted. When he came up the road from his office and through the gate, he brought a little three-cornered wall bookcase in his hand, which he said he would screw into the walls of my room once he had finished the chores. But his second bulwark both to my resolve and my security is even more memorable. As he followed me through the doorway of my room and looked upon my furnishings and meager decorations—some cards, picturing roses or lilies, received for correct spelling in school, tacked to my walls, and a vase of goldenrod, which I had tearfully gathered from the fields—he took from his pocket his ring of keys and separated from it the one which, he said, would lock my door. I had quite forgotten that my room had a key, a distinction unclaimed by any other room in our house. After he had inserted it in the lock of my door and seen that it turned easily, he went away with the smile of the previous evening on his face.

When I went to bed that night in my own room with my new bookcase holding my own books on the wall and with my own lamp lighted on my bedside table, I locked my door and put the key under my pillow. My heart was beating furiously, as it continued to do at bedtime for many nights thereafter; and yet I was not too terrified to read for half an hour before I blew out my light. It was the first time I had ever read, alone, in bed, by lamp-light. And when I at last knew that I must blow out the friendly lamp and snuggle beneath my covers, my hand happily brushed the wall behind my bed. The wall was warm. I suddenly realized that it was the back wall of our kitchen, which after all was near at hand and in which there would always be red circles of light around the black covers of the Rising Sun.

Notes

from the
newsfront



Children Salute Their Friends.—May 18 is Goodwill Day. Every year on that date the boys and girls in Wales send a radio greeting to children all over the world. For thirty-three years the message of friendship has gone out, urging young folk everywhere to spread a new spirit across the globe. The children's Goodwill Day commemorates an historic event, for May 18, 1899, was the date of the first official peace conference held at The Hague.

Legal Sanction.—The attorney general of Georgia recently ruled that marriage is not grounds for expelling high school students from classes. Said the attorney general: "Marriage is a domestic relation highly favored by law."

Investing in Men.—A large Wisconsin manufacturing firm is underwriting the cost of providing treatment for any alcoholics on its staff. Almost 80 per cent of those treated have recovered completely.

Book Honors.—A Netherlands fishing village is the setting of *The Wheel on the School*, a Harper publication that has won the Newbery medal for the most distinguished children's book of 1954. Author Meindert DeJong tells how six Dutch children searched for a wheel to put on the school roof so storks could nest there. The second coveted award in the field of children's literature, the Caldecott medal for the most distinguished picture book, went to Marcia Brown for her color illustrations of a story beloved by generations—*Cinderella*. The publisher is Scribner.

Explosive Lingo.—Modern warfare is giving us an assortment of brisk alphabetical tags. The atomic, cobalt, and hydrogen bombs are respectively referred to as the A-, C-, and H-bombs. The abbreviation for atomic, bacteriological, and chemical warfare is ABC warfare. Among the latest verbal shortcuts are IBM (for intercontinental ballistic missile) and IBV (for intercontinental ballistic vehicle).

Haven at Pugwash.—Cyrus Eaton, a Cleveland millionaire, is turning his fifteen-room summer residence into a "home for thinkers." Far away from noise and confusion, the haven is located on a point of land that juts into the harbor of Pugwash, Nova Scotia (population, five hundred; chief products, lumber and lobsters). The first guests at the refuge, scheduled to arrive this summer, will be American, British, and Canadian scholars nominated by universities.

The TV View of Life.—Daddy and his five-year-old daughter were at the breakfast table chatting away at a great clip. Sitting with them, Mother sipped her orange juice in drowsy silence. Finally the little girl, puzzled by her mother's unusual quiet, inquired casually, "What's the trouble, Mommy? Is your sound off?"

A GUIDE FOR DISCUSSION

Based on "Are There Permanent Values in Progressive Education?" (page 23)

Pertinent Points

1. Progressive education, as it is described here, was a reaction against some of the weaknesses of traditional school practices. The movement took issue with the old school on such matters as these:
 - Respect for the child's personality.
 - The teaching of subject matter.
 - The school's responsibility for the all-around development of children.
 - Reasons for learning (or motivation).

Compare the thinking of progressive education and the traditional school on these points. How does Hollis Caswell look upon each?

2. Why does progressive education attach less importance to marks and awards than did the traditional school? What two criticisms have been brought against progressive education on this score? Are they well founded?

In President Caswell's judgment, many of the values highlighted by progressive education are desirable. In his words, "They reflect deep-running currents within the liberal democratic tradition of our country." What resemblances do you see between the values of democracy and those of progressive education?

4. What two explanations does the author offer for the attacks on progressive education? From your own experience—based on what you have read and what you have learned by talking with, and listening to, people—what other explanations would you add? Are there any stimulating, important forces in education today comparable with the progressive education movement in the 1920's and 1930's?

Program Suggestions

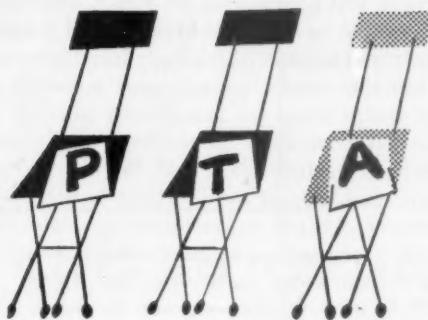
- The article mentions Hughes Mearns and the creative writing of his students at Lincoln School. In his book *Creative Youth* this outstanding teacher has told the story of how boys and girls in his classes were stirred to write beautifully. Have one or two members read the book and then tell the group about Dr. Mearns' teaching methods. They might also cite passages that reveal his thinking on some of the issues raised by progressive education.

- Try dramatizing classroom situations that stress some of the values of progressive education. You might role-play each situation twice, showing first how the problem might be handled in the traditional school and then how it might have worked out according to the beliefs of progressive education.

These situations need not be limited to the classroom. You might also role-play certain problems that arise in the home and in the neighborhood, illustrating in these sociodramas the basic beliefs of both the traditional and the progressive schools.

- Invite your principal or a classroom teacher to discuss how the teaching methods used in your school reflect the values of progressive education. You might open the program with the film *Skippy and the Three R's*, available from the National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

- Plan a panel discussion of the role of the school in guiding children's all-round development. The main question here might well be to what extent the school should share this responsibility with the home, the church, and various community agencies and organizations.



projects and activities

Professionals Promote Parent Education

MY HUSBAND and I happen to be a team of psychologists. Last October, when our eldest daughter entered kindergarten, we were asked to fill out a routine questionnaire for the school. One of the questions read, "In what way do you feel you could make some contribution to the school?" We replied that if there was a parent education study group we would be glad to serve as discussion leaders. The kindergarten teacher was immediately interested. She explained to us that in the twenty-five years since the school was built there had been 'no study-discussion program for parents, though she knew many would welcome such a group.

Things moved swiftly after that. There were three conferences—with the district school superintendent (he also thought it was a fine idea), with the P.T.A. board, and then with the membership at a regular P.T.A. meeting. And the parent education study-discussion group was enthusiastically accepted as an official P.T.A. activity. Now we could get to work!

The Group Comes into Being

Ours is a small primary school (kindergarten through third grade) with not quite two hundred pupils. My husband and I recognized that if this first group experience was to be a really happy and productive one, each member must have ample opportunity to participate, to express himself. Obviously, then, the group would have to be a fairly small one, so we arbitrarily limited the membership to the parents of kindergarten children. There were protests, of course; it seemed that all the parents wanted the chance to join. But we pointed out that this first group was really an experiment. If everything went well, other study-discussion groups could be planned for the year ahead.

As was to be expected, there were many questions. Wise parents wondered whether my husband and I, both being psychologists, would supply answers to every personal problem, tell them how to rear their children, or uphold all the new theories of child

guidance. Even before the group was actually organized, therefore, we attempted—at P.T.A. meetings and through our school bulletin—to define the purpose of the group and the role of the discussion leader. "Living with our children can be an exciting challenge and rewarding experience," we wrote in our November P.T.A. bulletin, "if we know what to expect from them and what they need from us. Sometimes, through the simple, pleasant means of talking things over, we parents gain understanding of some of the ways family life may be made more satisfying."

This, then, was to be the purpose of our study-



Pictured here are some of the members of the study-discussion group described in this article. Standing, left to right, are Dr. Marc Nissenson (holding a copy of the *National Parent-Teacher*), Clarence Potter, Gladys Zak (kindergarten teacher), and Harry Eichler. Seated, Mrs. Marvin Florent, Mrs. Clarence Potter, Mrs. J. Weinstein, Mrs. Harry Lindstrom, Mrs. Robert Hanley, Mrs. Harry Eichler, Mrs. Vernon Heins, Mrs. J. T. Ross, Mrs. Harry Skidmore, and Mrs. Marc Nissenson. Several of the father members are not shown in the photograph.

discussion group: to learn together about how children grow and develop so that we parents could best foster those growth processes.

A study group chairman was appointed. She has assumed the continuing responsibility for arranging meeting times, getting in touch with group members, and reporting to the P.T.A. board. Though the superintendent graciously offered us whatever school facilities we needed for our meetings, our group agreed that it might be more comfortable and relaxing to meet in a home. (It happens to be ours.) This we have done—and we often find that a second cup of coffee does wonders to stimulate discussion of an idea!

We agreed also to meet in the evening on the third Wednesday of each month. More than half the kindergarten parents participate. So does the kindergarten teacher, and several other members of the teaching staff have asked to join the group. There are no fees. Fortunately we have been able to borrow a sound projector and to obtain films without charge.

Basic Text—The P.T.A. Magazine

My husband and I have been deeply impressed with the excellent study programs in the *National Parent-Teacher*. We think the material in these programs is exceptionally well organized and that if our group follows the monthly study guides we just can't help having a fine learning experience. However, we felt that the content to be explored by this group would have to be determined chiefly by their own needs and interests.

At the first meeting, therefore, Dr. Nissenson gave a brief summary of normal personality development in children. The group then offered suggestions for topics to be studied and discussed at future meetings. We think it more than a happy coincidence that those topics fit wonderfully well into the preschool program in the *National Parent-Teacher*. For each

topic our basic text is, of course, the P.T.A. magazine.

As we continue to meet, my husband and I know that our role will become increasingly inconspicuous. We will function essentially as parent members of the group except when we occasionally attempt to sharpen or delineate issues or mention factual material from the literature in the field. We have always avoided any semblance of the classroom-lecture technique. Instead we try to maintain an informal "round-table" atmosphere wherein each member feels he or she can speak up freely at any time.

Our P.T.A. study-discussion group is unusual in several ways and hence presents some problems that may not exist in many other groups. We two leaders really play three roles. We are professional people, and for this reason our group may listen most attentively when we urge subscriptions to the *National Parent-Teacher* or suggest other readings.

We are also "fellow" kindergarten parents, and in this role we have to accept the challenge of any curious parent who wonders whether our five-year-old is the living example of our combined years of reading and study.

Our third role, that of host and hostess in our home, gave us more than a few nervous moments in the beginning. For instance, what would happen were a parent to ask "How about discipline?" just at the moment when our little girl suddenly chimed in with "Gimme a drink of water, and I hope all these old fogies go home."

Fortunately, we have discovered that this group of fellow parents and teachers have a fine sense of humor. They know that nobody, including the discussion leaders, has all the answers—and that there is much for all of us to learn together.

—NORMA NISSENNON

Green Bay Road School P.T.A. Parent Education Group, Highland Park, Illinois



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You have read in the March *National Parent-Teacher* about the White House Conference on Education—its purposes, plans, and participants. Shown here are three members of the President's Committee for the White House Conference—Mrs. Rollin Brown, first vice-president of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, James W. Hargrove of Shreveport, Louisiana (at left), and Judge Potter Stewart of Cincinnati, Ohio. Mrs. Brown is chairman of one of the six subcommittees whose topics will make up the discussion program of the White House Conference itself. Her group is concerned with the question "How can we get enough good teachers—and keep them?" Watch for news of further progress as the date of the meeting, November 28 to December 1, draws nearer.

N.P.T. quiz program



Consultants

Nancy Bayley
Muriel W. Brown
Flanders Dunbar, M.D.

Reuben Hill
Edmond R. Hess, M.D.
William C. Menninger, M.D.

Esther E. Prevey
Ralph H. Ojemann
Lyle M. Spencer

• *I am confronted with a problem that has me really worried and confused. I am the mother of two girls, aged six and one. The older child refuses to go to school. She went to kindergarten for one year and seemed to enjoy it very much, but since entering the first grade, she is quite insistent about not going. The teacher has told me that she always knows her lessons well. At home she loves to show me how well she can read and write, but it has been almost impossible for me to get her to leave the house and go to school. On the other hand, she claims that she likes school, her teacher, and her friends.*

I have discussed this problem with the teacher, the principal, and the school psychologist, all of whom have been very cooperative and considerate. They seem to feel that the child may be jealous of her younger sister and afraid that if she goes to school she might be missing something at home. Is there any advice you can give me?

First of all, you are to be commended for the steps you have taken to find out what causes your little girl's behavior. It certainly would do no good to sit in judgment on the child and call her unreasonable, disobedient, or lazy. The wise approach is to determine what lies underneath.

This is, in fact, the important and indispensable first step. When our children behave in ways that puzzle us, there may be a variety of possible causes. Before we can understand or redirect the behavior we have to find out which ones are operating here.

When the problem became too complex, you rightly turned to the persons "next in line" who might help you—the teacher, the principal, the school psychologist. They suggested one possible cause; there could be many others. Undoubtedly both the teacher and the school psychologist will need more time and a great deal of information.

They will want to find out, for example, about your home—what things you and your husband and the children do together, how you all feel toward one another, what responsibilities your six-year-old takes and is expected to take, and to what extent and in what way you and your husband plan for both children. They will need information about the little girl's play, her companions both in and out of school, and the feelings of the children toward each other.

If you and your husband have not already done so, I suggest that you tell your school principal that you are ready to help the teacher and the psychologist gather what data they need. Let him know that you are ready to come in for conferences and interviews at any time. In case you haven't done so already, I also suggest that you join a P.T.A. parent education study-discussion group. Here you will learn about the causes of child behavior.

Perhaps the school psychologist will feel that more specialized help is needed and will advise you to get in touch with the child guidance clinic or the family psychiatrist in your community.

Suppose that after a thorough study of the child, the school psychologist feels that all signs point to jealousy of the younger sister. You and your husband can then work with him to get further light on how this jealousy came about and how you and the teacher can help your six-year-old develop a feeling of being wanted and respected.

In short, my suggestion to you is first to work closely with the school personnel in helping them uncover causes. Second, through conferences and through parent education study-discussion groups, find out how parents can develop a home environment that will build a satisfying, constructive family life.

—RALPH H. OJEMANN

Child Welfare Research Station
State University of Iowa

Motion

picture

previews

PREVIEW EDITOR, ENTERTAINMENT FILMS

MRS. LOUIS L. BUCKLIN

FAMILY

Suitable for children if accompanied by adults

The Big Day—Orann Productions. Direction, Jacques Tati. There is little need of the accompanying English commentary in this charming, if somewhat studied, French film. Every year on the same day the carnival comes to the little town of Ste. Sévère, and for twenty-four hours life assumes a rosy hue. Even postman Jacques Tati takes time off to visit the fair and see a film showing how mail is delivered in America. His reaction to this gives him an excellent opportunity to display his skilled pantomime. Leading players: Jacques Tati, Guy Decombe.

Family 12-15 8-12
Good fun Yes Yes

The Eternal Sea—Republic. Direction, John H. Auer. An unpretentious, sympathetic, and occasionally stirring dramatization, based on the life story of Admiral John M. Hoskins of the United States Navy. After his second ship is sunk during World War II he is so badly injured that his leg has to be amputated. Although urged to retire he valiantly masters the use of an artificial leg and shows such stubborn courage that he is given command of a new carrier. There follows a brilliant and illustrious career capped by his transfer, at his own request, to the Pacific division of Military Air Transport Service. Here he has the opportunity to prove to other disabled men that "no physical handicap can disable a man who retains his spirit." Authentic war scenes are skillfully dubbed in, and the leading players enact their roles with warmth and respect. Production values, unfortunately, are not up to the theme, but student reviewers were thrilled by the picture. Leading players: Sterling Hayden, Alexis Smith, Dean Jagger.

Family 12-15 8-12
Good Excellent Good

Interrupted Melody—MGM. Direction, Curtis Bernhardt. This pleasant, unassuming musical biography of Marjorie Lawrence offers a sure-fire human-interest story with a colorful operatic background. Eleanor Parker portrays the beloved young singer whose brilliant singing career and marriage to a struggling young American doctor are suddenly jeopardized when she contracts polio. The agonies of readjustment for the young couple are neither overdrawn nor oversentimentalized, and the audience is happy to share the singer's final triumph. Leading players: Eleanor Parker, Glenn Ford, Roger Moore.

Family 12-15 8-12
Good Good Yes

A Man Called Peter—20th Century-Fox. Direction, Henry Koster. More sermon than story, more anecdote than plot, more romance than drama, this is a warmly appealing biography of a man who enjoyed a close friendship with God, young Peter Marshall. In early manhood he is saved providentially from death and feels himself called to a life of dedication to God's service. It is a long hard pull from his native Glasgow to the United States and Columbia Theological Seminary in Georgia, from a small church to the famed "Church of the Presidents" in Washington and the position of chaplain of the United States Senate. Student reviewers found the story inspiring. Adult reviewers felt that more of the fresh, penetrating commentary glimpsed in one Senate prayer and less of the love story would have made a stronger film. All agreed that Richard Todd, with his delectable Scottish accent, made a believable and dynamic Peter. Beautiful color; excellent production



© 20th Century-Fox Film
Richard Todd as Peter Marshall in *A Man Called Peter*.

values. Leading players: Richard Todd, Jean Peters, Jill Esmond.

Family 12-15 8-12
Sympathetic biography Yes Yes

Stranger on Horseback—United Artists. Direction, Jacques Tourneur. A routine western with a better-than-average theme. Joel McCrea is circuit judge who rides into the frontier town of Bannerman, uncovers a shooting committed by the son of the self-imposed king of the territory, and, with the aid of the vixenish daughter, brings the boy to justice. Leading players: Joel McCrea, Miroslava.

Family 12-15 8-12
Western fans Fair Yes

ADULTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Big House U.S.A.—United Artists. Direction, Howard W. Koch. A brutal, well-produced crime melodrama about the planned kidnapping and accidental death of a little boy in Colorado National Park. The would-be kidnapper, later imprisoned for extortion, cooperates in a prison break. The film includes a welter of murders by sledge hammer, steam boiler, and blow torch. Leading players: Broderick Crawford, Ralph Meeker.

Adults 12-15 8-12
Powerful shocker Poor No

Canyon Crossroads—United Artists. Direction, Al Werker. The threadbare theme of greed for gold (in this case uranium) is stamped perfunctorily upon this melodrama, laid in the uranium fields of Moab, Utah. Unethical, like all westerns that carry frontier lawlessness into the present day. Leading players: Richard Basehart, Phyllis Kirk.

Adults 12-15 8-12
Poor Poor Poor

Cell 2245, Death Row—Columbia. Direction, Fred F. Sears. A violent melodrama has been fashioned from Caryl Chessman's

autobiography written in the death cell at San Quentin. The routinely sensational tale of a boy's revolt against poverty, which leads him from petty pilfering to the death sentence, gives no new insight into what makes men into criminals. Excessive footage is devoted to earlier crimes. The hero's protestations of innocence and his own clever legal maneuvers, which postpone his execution for six years, give the impression that only bad luck put him where he is today. Leading players: William Campbell, Robert Campbell, Marian Carr.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Poor Misleading No

Creature with the Atom Brain—Columbia. Direction, Edward L. Cahn. Dead men, brought to robot-like life by atom rays and controlled from a laboratory by electrodes inserted in their brains, commit a series of murders to carry out a gangster's revenge. Large doses of medical and scientific evidence unfortunately may lend some credibility to these "creatures." Leading players: Richard Denning, Angela Stevens.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Poor Trash No

Cult of the Cobra—Universal-International. Direction: Francis D. Lyon. What seems to be just another cobra swaying to the strains of a flute is really a beautiful girl, gifted with a repulsive talent for changing form at will. She sinks her poisoned fangs into several necks before her writhing end. Leading players: Faith Domergue, Richard Long.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Pure hokum Trash No

The End of the Affair—Columbia. Direction, Edward Dmytryk. Adhering closely to Graham Greene's novel, this brilliantly acted drama combines the finely drawn suspense for which he is known and the preoccupation with theology which characterizes his later work. Deborah Kerr gives a luminous performance as the woman who vows to give up her lover if the God in whom she has never believed will spare his life during an air raid. Many will find Greene's view of belief in God austere. Yet we feel compassion for this woman whose agonized struggle to resist Him leads to exhaustion and death. The supporting cast is superb; the backgrounds of wartime London, excellent. Leading players: Deborah Kerr, Van Johnson, John Mills.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Absorbing and provocative Very mature No

Escape to Burma—RKO. Direction, Allan Dwan. An improbable and pretentious adventure tale in which red-haired Barbara Stanwyck, mistress of a fabulous teak and elephant station, falls in love with enigmatic Robert Ryan, who carries a sack of rubies around his neck. Their romance is made to survive various unconvincing adventures. Leading players: Barbara Stanwyck, Robert Ryan, David Farrar.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Poor Trash Trash

Five Against the House—Columbia. Direction, Phil Karlson. Three wise-cracking university students set out to rob a gambling establishment in Reno, taking with them a friend who is ignorant of their intentions and also the friend's fiancée. Though their idea is simply to show that it can be done, the plan is taken over and executed by the boy who suffers temporary periods of derangement as the result of his years in Korea. The mediocre plot is matched by mediocre acting and direction. Leading players: Guy Madison, Brian Keith, Kim Novak.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Trash Trash No

Hell's Island—Paramount. Direction, Phil Karlson. A fat wheelchair villain assigns John Payne to recover a ruby lost or stolen in a South American plane wreck, because the wife of the supposed thief was formerly Payne's fiancée. This hastily-thrown-together potboiler, artificially colored with lurid romance and seasoned with violence, is nevertheless flat and tasteless. Leading players: John Payne, Mary Murphy.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Trash Trash No

Hit the Deck—MGM. Direction, Roy Rowland. An elaborate musical comedy in Cinemascope and Eastman color, based on Vincent Youmans' musical play of the middle twenties. It boasts an impressive cast of talented young stars as well as older well-known actors. The thin plot involves the escapades of three gobs who wreck the apartment of a disreputable man-about-town to keep the sister of one of them from being compromised. They become involved in many improbable, occasionally humorous situations. Among the song and dance numbers is "Hallelujah," of which one chorus is beautifully sung by a magnificent Negro quartet. Leading players: Jane Powell, Tony Martin, Debbie Reynolds, Walter Pidgeon, Vic Damone,

Gene Raymond, Ann Miller, Russ Tamblyn, J. Carroll Naish, Kay Armen.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Musical comedy fans Entertaining Sophisticated in part

Kiss Me Deadly—United Artists. Direction, Robert Aldrich. Mickey Spillane's vicious, degenerate melodrama makes it plain that the forces of law and order would be in a bad way without private investigator Mike Hammer. He can beat or torture his suspects while the police are handicapped by decency and the law. Leading players: Ralph Meeker, Gaby Rogers.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Degrading No

The Looters—Universal-International. Direction, Abner Biberman. A strongbox holding \$250,000, discovered in a wrecked plane, and a mink-coated "blonde" with a heart of brass gold create dissension among rescuers and passengers in a cheap and violent melodrama. Leading players: Rory Calhoun, Julie Adams, Ray Danton.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Matter of taste Poor No

Mr. Potts Goes to Moscow—Associated British. Direction, Mario Zampi. An uneven British farce that satirizes bureaucracy both at home and behind the Iron Curtain. A young plumber is lured to Moscow and entertained royally—but not, as he thinks, because the Russians are interested in his inventions in the field of sanitary engineering. The chase that follows his learning the real reason involves much climbing in and out of windows and across roof tops. Leading players: George Cole, Oscar Homolka, Nadia Gray.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Fair Fair Yes

The Naked Heart—Associated Artists. Direction, Marc Allegret. A young girl, returning to her backwoods Canadian home in 1912 after five years in a convent, searches for the man of her dreams among three candidates for marriage. The tired plot moves at snail's pace across the starkly beautiful snow-covered landscape. Leading players: Michele Morgan, Kieron Moore, Jack Watling.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Matter of taste Matter of taste No

The Purple Plain—United Artists. Direction, Robert Parrish. A romantic, in part grueling British melodrama. Gregory Peck, a Canadian serving with the RAF in Burma in World War II, is on the verge of a nervous breakdown caused by the death of his wife in a bombing raid on London. Through his love for a gentle Burmese girl he regains his will to live and saves not only himself but his injured navigator when their aircraft crashes. Lovely Win Min Than makes an impressive debut, while Brenda de Banzie adds humor as an outspoken Scottish missionary. Leading players: Gregory Peck, Win Min Than, Bernard Lee, Brenda de Banzie.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Fair Yes Tense

Revenge of the Creature—Universal-International. Direction, Jack Arnold. The "Creature from the Black Lagoon" turns up again in the Amazon, only to be captured and brought to Florida. Part man and part fish, he gets annoyed at being chained in a tank while scientist John Agar and ichthyologist Lori Nelson swim around just out of his clutches. He breaks loose, kills a few people, and heads for the ocean, gasping noisily. Leading players: John Agar, Lori Nelson, John Bromfield.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Trash Poor Poor

Three Cases of Murder—Associated Artists. Direction, Wendy Toye, David Eady, George More O'Ferrall. There is something for every taste in this trio of excellently acted suspense stories. "In the Picture" is a macabre fantasy about the pictures in an art gallery. "You Killed Elizabeth" asks "Who did it?" when murder results from the rivalry of two friends for the same girl. "Lord Moundrago," the most arresting of the three tales, is a psychological study of revenge. Orson Welles is brilliant as an arrogant peer who sees himself threatened by a visionary Weishuman. Leading players: Orson Welles, John Gregson, Alan Badel.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Suspense story devotees Mature No

Treasure of Ruby Hill—United Artists. Direction, Frank McDonald. A bang-bang, black-and-white western in which everyone goes around madly shooting everyone else. A jerky, talky script attempts feebly to explain the childish goings-on. Leading players: Zachary Scott, Carole Matthews.

Adults 15-18 12-15
Poor Poor Poor

Untamed—20th Century-Fox. Direction, Henry King. A lavish, long-drawn-out "soap opera" laid in Africa but with a familiar western plot—pioneers, wagon trains, and Zulus instead of Indians. Susan Hayward, as a young Irish beauty, meets and falls in love with Dutch patriot Tyrone Power, who has come to Ireland from Africa to buy horses. Patriotism pulls him back, but Susan soon follows, accompanied by husband and child. When their caravan is attacked by thousands of Zulus (the best action in the play, according to senior reviewers) her husband is conveniently killed and a maze of synthetic adventures follows. Cinemascope and De Luxe color enhance the beautiful African country, but, as one student reviewer stated, "The corny script still came through." Leading players: Tyrone Power, Susan Hayward.

Adults 15-18
Matter of taste Poor

15-18
Poor

12-15
No

16MM FILMS

The Drawings of Leonardo—Brandon Films. 26 minutes. Chosen from the collection at the Royal Academy, these splendidly vital drawings from the Da Vinci notebooks disclose a relatively unknown facet of his genius. The subject matter ranges through geology, architecture, anatomy, ballistics, and animals, among whom horses are his favorites. Original score by Alan Rawsthorne; commentary by Laurence Olivier.

The Fish and the Fisherman—Brandon Films. 26 minutes. Much of the flavor of the original Pushkin poem is retained in this sensitively drawn animation of the classic fairy tale, accompanied by appropriate folk music. A whimsical undersea ballet is enhanced by charming, subdued color. For young children.

Flemish Painting 1440-1540—Film Images. 10 minutes.
Flemish Painting 1540-1640—Film Images. 10 minutes.

Portrait of Holland—17th Century—Film Images. 12 minutes. This outstanding trio of films, produced by the Detroit Institute of Art, shows Flanders as a center of medieval culture. The first and second films explore the texture, color, and details of major paintings from Van Eyck through Bruegel and Rubens. In the third film every variation of the Dutch countryside is expressed in the paintings of Jacob van Ruisdael and others. The culmination of seventeenth-century Dutch art is revealed in the works of Rembrandt. The three films are accompanied by music of the period. Parents, teachers, students of art appreciation, and others interested in art and history will find in these films a most enjoyable way of becoming acquainted both with an art period and with the people and their customs.

The Freight Train—Encyclopaedia Britannica Films. 10 minutes. The giant maze of a railroad yard is alive with movement and color as long strings of cars roll in from all over the country carrying food and livestock. The narrator explains the various jobs of engineers, conductors, trackmen, and switchmen in terms interesting to youngsters.

Macbeth—Association Films. The admirable two-hour television version of this Shakespearean play, starring Maurice Evans and Judith Anderson, is available free from the following offices of Association Films: Broad at Elm Street, Ridgefield, New Jersey; 79 East Adams Street, Chicago 3, Illinois; 1108 Jackson Street, Dallas, Texas; and 351 Turk Street, San Francisco 2, California.

Report to the American People—Foreign Operations Administration, 26 minutes. A progress report by the FOA showing how Americans are sharing their scientific and industrial knowledge in agriculture, health, and education with the people of undeveloped countries. Under the guidance of United States fieldworkers we see a new school being built in Ecuador; men learning to be health officers in Ethiopia; and foreign trainees learning skills in American colleges and laboratories, then using their knowledge back home in Indo-China and Libya. Request this free film from the Educational Film Library Association, 345 East Forty-sixth Street, New York City.

The Storytellers of the Canterbury Tales—University of California at Los Angeles, 18 minutes. The exquisitely illuminated pages of the original Ellesmere manuscript, owned by the Huntington Library in Pasadena, are the inspiration for this delightful little film. Colorful figurines of the Canterbury pilgrims, painstakingly copied from the manuscripts, are placed and moved about within the Tabard Inn and its courtyard. Music written in the fashion of the fourteenth century accompanies the lifting (though a little difficult to understand) Middle English verse of Chaucer. Enthusiastic comments from a pre-viewing group of high school students were "Vivid color and faithful character"; "interesting experience to see Chaucer in movie form"; and "sharpness of photographic detail."

MOTION PICTURES PREVIOUSLY REVIEWED

Junior Matinee

The Atomic Kid—Children and young people, amusing; family, fair.
A Gift from Dirk—Good.

Family

Abbott and Costello Meet the Keystone Kops—Good slapstick.
Assignment Children—Excellent.
Captain Lightfoot—Good.
Chief Crazy Horse—Good Western.
Cisnerama Holiday—Entertaining.
Destination Mago—Amusing.
The Glass Slipper—Delightful.
Hunters of the Deep—Excellent.
The Long Gray Line—Children, too long; young people and adults, good of its type.

No and Pa Kettle at Waikiki—Matter of taste.

The Queen's Birthday Parade—Excellent.

The Supersonic Age—Children, good; young people and adults, excellent.

Tarzan's Hidden Jungle—Fair.

Trouble in the Glee—Entertaining.

Underwater—Entertaining.

White Feather—Good Western.

Adults and Young People

The Americans—Children, mature; young people and adults, matter of taste.
Bad Day at Black Rock—Children, no; young people, mature; adults, excellent thriller.

Battle Cry—Children and young people, no; adults, matter of taste.

Battle Taxi—Children, exciting; young people and adults, interesting.

The Beachcomber—Fair entertainment.

The Belles of St. Trinian's—Children, possibly; young people and adults, matter of taste.

Block Tuesday—Children, no; young people, poor; adults, matter of taste.

The Bridges of Toko-Ri—Good.

Chance Meeting—Children, no; young people, very mature; adults, thought provoking.

Conquest of Space—Children, tense; young people and adults, science-fiction fans.

Country Girl—Children, no; young people, mature; adults, excellent.

Day of Triumph—Interesting.

Deep in My Heart—Good entertainment.

Devil's Harbor—Poor.

End of Edas—Children and young people, no; adults, brilliantly directed but confused in development of theme.

Gate of Hell—Excellent.

The Good Die Young—Children, no; young people, poor; adults, matter of taste.

The Green Scarf—Children, no; young people, mature; adults, fair.

The Heart of the Matter—Children, no; young people, mature; adults, matter of taste.

Heartbreak Ridge—Excellent.

Hell's Outpost—Trash.

Holiday for Harriette—Children, no; young people, mature; adults, excellent of type.

An Inspector Calls—Children, no; young people, mature; adults, thought-provoking.

The Intruder—Children and young people, good; adults, thoughtful melodrama.

It Came from Beneath the Sea—Children, yes; young people, probably amusing; adults, matter of taste.

It Started in Paradise—Matter of taste.

Land of Fury—Children and young people, poor; adults, fair.

A Life in the Balance—Children, no; young people, mature; adults, excellent.

Man Without a Star—No.

Many Rivers to Cross—Matter of taste.

Marty—Children, mature; young people and adults, excellent.

Monster from the Ocean Floor—Waste of time.

New York Confidential—Children and young people, no; adults, matter of taste.

The Other Women—Incredibly bad.

Prince of Players—Children, mature; young people and adults, good.

The Racers—Children, no; young people, mature; adults, brilliant Cinemascope photography.

Rus for Cover—Fair.

The Silver Chalice—Children, mature; young people and adults, colorful spectacle.

Six Bridges to Cross—Poor.

Smoke Signal—Children, mature; young people and adults, western fans.

The Stranger's Hand—Children, dull; young people, fair; adults, disappointing.

Target Earth—Mediocre.

Ten Wanted Men—Children, no; young people, violent and sadistic; adults, matter of taste.

Theodora, Slave Empress—Children, poor; young people and adults, spectacle fans.

There's No Business Like Show Business—Matter of taste.

Three for the Show—Children, no; young people, mediocre; adults, matter of taste.

The Tiger and the Flame—Fair.

Tight Spot—Children, no; young people, mature; adults, amusing of type.

Tonight's the Night—Children, mature; young people and adults, matter of taste.

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea—Spectacular melodrama.

Vera Cruz—Children, no; young people, poor; adults, stupid and brutal.

The Violent Men—Children and young people, no; adults, matter of taste.

Wages of Fear—Children, no; young people, too tense; adults, excellent of its type.

White Orchid—Poor.

Woman's Prison—Very poor.

Young at Heart—Children, too long; young people and adults, lightly diverting.

Note: The following three films, previously reviewed, are distributed by the International Film Bureau (57 East Jackson, Chicago 4, Illinois), not the International Film Foundation: *One Little Indian* (February), *Land of the Long Day* (March), and *Angotee* (March).

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